

ENGAGING
THE QUR'AN

A COMPENDIUM OF RELIABLE
SHIA HADITH

BY
SHAYKH AMMAAR MUSLIM AL-DODOMI

Foreword by
SHAYKH AZHAR NASSER



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*Please recite Surat Al-Fatiha for the following believers
who have left this world:*

*Haji Naushad Ali son of Fidahussain Momin, and
Marhumeen of the families of Ahmed Walji & Jenabai
Khamis and Mohamed Husein Rahemtullah Walji &
Zehrabanu Sherali Zaver.*



*Dedicated to Sayyid al-Qurrā', student of al-Ṣādiq (a), and
teacher of many: Ḥamza b. Ḥabīb al-Ẓayyāl (d. 156).*

Who, when given a load of gold for teaching the Qur'an, said:

أنا لا آخذ أجراً على القرآن أرجو بذلك الفردوس الأعلى

*'I do not take monetary payment for the Qur'an; I seek
by this the highest paradise.'*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my family, especially my parents and my wife for their constant support.

I would like to thank Ali al-Nawfali for being a faithful study partner in our shared journey in pursuit of knowledge. His constructive feedback has made this book better.

I extend my gratitude to Abbas Ismail who proofread an earlier draft of this book, making the book much more readable.

Finally, I would like to thank Shaykh Azhar Nasser for inviting me to publish this book.

Our earliest predecessors were men who, with the encouragement of the Imams, dedicated their lives to learning and teaching the Book of God and became the undisputed authorities in it. The time has come for us to take on this mantle and develop ourselves in all fields related to the Qur'an.

I end by acknowledging the truth that perfection belongs only to Allah!

If a reader notices any errors in this book then I humbly request them to direct my attention to it by contacting me so as to improve the work.

If a reader feels that a report which should have been included has not been included, I am most willing to hear or read their argument and discuss it with them.

May Allah accept this effort and make it sincere for His sake! Verily He is Ever-Near, Always Responsive!

CONTENTS

Acknowledgments	5
Foreword	7
Preface	10
Approach of this Book	13
Excursus: An Important Point on Translation Choice	17
1. What is the Qur'an?	20
2. What Was and What Will Be	23
3. Contents of the Qur'an	25
4. The Greater of the 'Two Weighty Things'	27
5. The Qur'an on the Day of Judgment	29
6. Recite and Ascend!	31
7. I Would Have Elevated You!	39
8. But What if I Forget?	45
9. Three Types of Reciters	47
10. True Riches	51
11. The Parable of the Four Fruits	53
12. Reward of Reciting the Qur'an	55
13. The Houses in Which the Qur'an is Recited	59
14. The Minimum to be Recited Every Day	62
15. Merit of Specific Chapters and Verses	64
16. Pace of Recitation	71
17. Tone of Recitation	74
18. How Long to Complete?	79
19. A True Scholar with the Qur'an	85
20. Created or Uncreated?	87
21. Personal Interpretation of the Qur'an	90
22. Decorating the Qur'an	93
23. Buying and Selling the Qur'an	96
24. Charging Money for Teaching the Qur'an	102
25. Miscellaneous	106
Bibliography	109

FOREWORD

The Qur'an is the literal word of God, revealed to His final messenger, Muhammad son of Abdullah. It represents the final testament of the Almighty to humanity, and stands as the living miracle of the Prophet, containing the secrets to prosperity in this life and the next. Its meanings are profound, its eloquence enchanting. The Qur'an challenges its skeptics to produce something of comparable depth and beauty. From the time of its revelation over fourteen centuries ago until the present day, the most eloquent poets of Arabia and masters of prose have all failed to match its magnificence, acknowledging, often reluctantly, that such words could not have emanated from a mortal mind.

The scholars of the *sīra* (*biography of the Prophet*) report that the pagans of Mecca harbored hope that their foremost intellectual and linguistic master, Walīd b. al-Mughīrā, could craft a piece of literature surpassing the beauty and depth of the Qur'an. However, historical accounts reveal that after listening to a few verses of the Qur'an, he spent days attempting to compose something of equal merit. Ultimately, he emerged and made this public confession:

وماذا أقول؟! فوالله، ما فيكم من رجل أعلم بالأشعار مني، ولا أعلم
برجزه، ولا بقصيده، ولا بأشعار الجن مني، والله، ما يشبه الذي يقول
شيئاً من هذا، والله، إن لقوله الذي يقول حلاوة، وإن عليه لطلاوة،

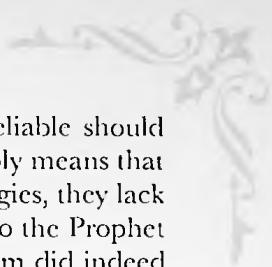
وإنه لمثمر أعلاه، مغدق أسفله، وإنه ليعلو وما يعلو، وإنه ليحطم ما
تحتة،

*“And what can I say? By God, there is no man among you more knowledgeable about poetry than I am, whether it is its rhymed prose or its verse, or even the poetry of the jinn. By God, what he says does not resemble anything that has been said before. By God, his words possess a sweetness, they have an elegance, their upper part is fruitful, and their lower part is abundant. Indeed, it rises and cannot be surpassed, and it crushes all that is beneath it...”*¹

The Qur’an, in some ways, resembles a vast ocean brimming with countless pearls, demanding skillful navigators to traverse its depths. The Ahl al-Bayt, the divinely appointed custodians and teachers of this sacred text, offer invaluable guidance for those who seek to understand and engage with the Qur’an. Thus, it is incumbent upon us to heed their sayings and instructions regarding the proper approach to the Qur’an. By adopting the etiquettes and protocols taught by the Prophet and his family, we can maximize the benefits and profound insights that the Qur’an has to offer.

The book before you is the culmination of countless hours of dedicated effort by Shaykh Ammaar Muslim al-Dodomi, who has meticulously curated traditions deemed authentic by the most rigorous standards of verification, following the methodology of the late Ayatollah Shaykh Āṣif Muḥsinī. He has done an exceptional job in translating these narrations and providing readers with useful explanatory notes. With that said, the title of the book can potentially mislead those who lack a background education in the field of hadith studies. Thus, as a humble reminder, it is crucial for the reader to grasp that “reliable”, in this context, does not imply that we should disregard traditions that fall short of these stringent standards. Rather, it signifies that we have greater confidence in attributing these narrations to the Ahl al-Bayt based on the available

1 *Al-Bidāya wa l-Nihāya*, v. 3, p. 78



evidence. Narrations labeled as technically unreliable should not be hastily dismissed as false or untrue. It simply means that according to some hadith-verification methodologies, they lack sufficient evidence to definitively attribute them to the Prophet or the Imams. It is entirely possible that the Imam did indeed utter the words found in narrations deemed to be weak or unreliable.

With this in mind, I sincerely hope that readers find this book both enlightening and beneficial. May this work inspire a deeper appreciation and connection with the Qur'an. I pray that Allah bestows perpetual reward upon the author and all who contributed to its creation. Ultimately, may Allah accept this humble offering, for it is through His acceptance that our deeds attain true value.

Azhar Nasser

June 2024

PREFACE

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم ومنه سبحانه الاستعانة للتميم وبعد

What can one say about the Qur'an? It is only right that we deficient ones limit ourselves to quoting descriptions from God, His Prophet (s), who was the primary recipient of the Qur'an, and the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt, who were the counterparts of the Qur'an, and this is what this book hopes to do.

I can proffer some words, however, about what our relationship with the Qur'an should be. I speak justifiably of relationship because the Qur'an is not exactly inanimate, is it? There are numerous reports which attribute corporeality to it in the next world, as we shall see.

For instance, Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said:

عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ فَضَّالٍ، عَمَّنْ ذَكَرَهُ:
عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «ثَلَاثَةٌ يَشْكُونَ إِلَى اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ:
مَسْجِدٌ خَرَابٌ لَا يُصَلِّي فِيهِ أَهْلُهُ، وَعَالِمٌ بَيْنَ جُهَالٍ، وَمُصْحَفٌ مُعَلَّقٌ
قَدْ وَقَعَ عَلَيْهِ الْعُبَارُ لَا يُقْرَأُ فِيهِ»

‘Three will complain to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: a derelict masjid in which no one prays, a scholar in the midst of the ignorant, and a

suspended copy of the Qur'an, upon which dust has gathered and which is not read from.²

Isn't this more characteristic of a spurned associate than a physical object?

Better, then, to court the Qur'an like no other and enjoy its constant companionship.

This is, after all, what the Prophet (s) instructed the Commander of the Faithful (a) in his final will:

مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ النُّعْمَانِ،
عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ:
«كَانَ فِي وَصِيَّةِ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ لِعَلِيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَنْ قَالَ: يَا
عَلِيُّ، أَوْصِيكَ فِي تَقْسِكَ بِخَصَالٍ أَحْفَظُهَا عَنِّي، ثُمَّ قَالَ: اللَّهُمَّ أَعْنُهُ:
أَمَّا الْأُولَى فَالصِّدْقُ، وَلَا تَخْرُجَنَّ (يَخْرُجَنَّ) مِنْ فِيكَ كَذِبَةٌ أَبَدًا ...
وَعَلَيْكَ بِتِلَاوَةِ الْقُرْآنِ عَلَى كُلِّ حَالٍ ...»

*'O 'Alī, I will unto you certain traits, preserve them from me ... As for the first then it is truthfulness, no lie should ever emit forth from your mouth ... and upon you is to recite the Qur'an in all circumstances ...'*³

Nothing would be more shameful for someone than to exit this world without finding intimacy with the Qur'an.

Imam al-Šādiq (a) said:

2 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 627, hadith 3/3521. The presence of Sahl b. Ziyād in the chain does not harm it because there exists a reliable alternative path to Ibn Faḍḍāl (see: *al-Iḥisāl*, vol. 1, p. 169, hadith 163). The only flaw, then, is the unnamed source who narrates this from the Imam.

3 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 15, pp. 196-197, hadith 33/14848. The report has a **reliable** chain.

عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ سُلَيْمِ الْفَرَّاءِ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «يَتَّبِعِي لِلْمُؤْمِنِ أَنْ لَا يَمُوتَ حَتَّى يَتَعَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ، أَوْ يَكُونَ فِي تَعْلِيمِهِ (تَعَلَّمَهُ)»

*'It befits a believer not to die without having learnt the Qur'an or being in the process of learning it.'*⁴

It is in the hope that we can strengthen our relationship with the Qur'an that I have gathered and translated the relevant reports found herein.

For when all is said and done, and when the final analysis is written, nothing will remain of this temporal world which is fleeting, except the eternal deeds done sincerely for Allah's sake.

Imam al-Bāqir (a) tells a story:

عَنْهُ (أحمد بن محمد بن عيسى)، عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ (بن سعيد)، عَنِ النَّضْرِ (بن سويد)، عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي مَرْثَمٍ الْأَنْصَارِيِّ، عَنْ جَابِرٍ: عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: «وَقَعَ مُصْحَفٌ فِي الْبَحْرِ، فَوَجَدُوهُ وَقَدْ ذَهَبَ مَا فِيهِ إِلَّا هَذِهِ الْآيَةُ: «أَلَا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَصِيرُ الْأُمُورُ»»

*A copy of the Qur'an fell into the sea, then they found it and all that was in it [of writing] had gone except this verse: "Look! To Allah do all matters return [42:53]."*⁵

4 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 613, hadith 3/3500. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except that Sulaym al-Farrā' does not give us the name of his source who narrates it from the Imam.

5 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 668, hadith 19/3587. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except that the status of Jābir b. Yazīd al-Ju'fī is controversial and that of al-Qāsim b. Sulaymān is unknown.

APPROACH OF THIS BOOK

The idea for this book came about while translating the chapter on the Qur'an⁶ in Ayatollah Muḥsinī's book – *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*⁷ – and I felt his effort could be improved, both in terms of the arrangement of the material and even in the selection of reports for inclusion.

Indeed, this is what Ayatollah Muḥsinī himself called for in his introduction, stating: 'I do not claim that all the reliable-in-chain reports [in the Shia corpus] are included in this book, for a researcher may find not a few reports [with reliable chains] which I have overlooked, so the one who can supplement them in the margins of a second edition will have done good,'⁸ before going on to enumerate a number of reasons why this may have happened.⁹ I have found several instances of this.

More significantly, Ayatollah Muḥsinī's criteria for the inclusion of a report is based solely on an analysis of its chain, but as he freely admits there are many reports whose chains might be flawed but whose contents can be authenticated by other

6 *Kitāb al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* in *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 2, pp. 373-390, hadiths 1541-1577.

7 A multi-volume compilation of attempting to gather all the reliable-in-chain narrations in the Shia hadith corpus.

8 *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol.1, p. 24 (under point 2).

9 He gives three: insufficient time for thorough review; erring being second nature to the human being, and inability to correctly identify some narrators with shared names.

means, that is, by looking at the so-called *qarā'in* – internal and external circumstantial ‘indicators’. But such an endeavor would require a greater effort than he was capable of expending at the time despite acknowledging its benefit. He holds out hope that ‘someone will be up to this task one day and complete the purpose of the book – if God wills.’¹⁰

With this in mind, I re-evaluated the reports included in Ayatollah Muhsinī’s *Muṣṣam* and cast the net wider by carefully going through the more than 619 reports on the Qur’an strewn across 41 sub-chapters (more than 200 pages)¹¹ of the encyclopaedic *Jāmi‘ Ahādīth al-Shī‘a*¹² looking for reports relevant to *fadā’il al-qur’ān*¹³ or merits of the Qur’an.

I began by isolating those reports whose chains are reliable. This is because the chain remains the primary means of authenticating reports, a method practiced from the time of our earliest scholars and which we cannot do without.

I went a step further by adding those reports whose weakness is not critically damning (containing one or two unknown

10 *Muṣṣam al-Ahādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 1, p. 25 (under point 3).

11 *Kitāb al-Qur’ān wa al-Du‘ā’ wa al-Dhikr, Abwāb Fadā’il al-Qur’ān wa Ta’ālumihī wa Ta’īmihī wa Qirā’atihī wa mā Yata’allaq bihī in Jāmi‘ Ahādīth al-Shī‘a*, vol. 19, pp. 20-227, hadiths 25563-26181.

12 I chose this as my reference text because it is the most recent and comprehensive scholarly attempt at gathering all the relevant reports from the *Ahl al-Bayt*. It combines what is contained in *Wasā’il al-Shī‘a* together with Mīrzā Nūrī’s *Mustadrak al-Wasā’il* (which incorporates material left out from *Wasā’il* as taken from numerous other sources).

13 In keeping with this well-defined genre, the book does not cover reports that have to do with the integrity of the Qur’anic text and its transmission (including the question of *tahrīf*), *tafsīr* (commentary) of individual verses, and *fiqh* (jurisprudential issues) related to the Qur’an such as the obligatory prostration for reciting certain verses, reciting whilst in the state of *janāba* (ritual impurity), touching the script without *wudū’* (ablution), places where the Qur’an cannot be recited, and what chapters are recommended to be recited in *ṣalāt* and on different days. I have, however, included a chapter on ‘Decorating the Qur’an’, ‘Buying and Selling the Qur’an’, and ‘Charging Money for Teaching the Qur’an’ which are undoubtedly jurisprudential in nature.

narrators) and whose contents are in line with the stronger reports. Looking for 'corroboration' of this kind is the main way through which one can attain confidence in reports beyond the chain.

I also paid special attention to themes that kept cropping up repeatedly (in different wordings) even if the chains are all defective in of themselves, because such plurality of chains may increase the probability that there is a historic kernel behind the attribution to the Imams.

Such measures are necessary because this topic was a particular favorite of 'pious' fabricators who wished to 'turn the people towards the Qur'an' even if that meant foisting lies upon the Prophet (s) and the Imams!¹⁴

Many of these spurious reports are, unfortunately, circulated among believers who do not have a clue as to their origins and end up giving them preference over stronger reports that actually do go back to the Imams.

The end-product of this endeavor is this book which contains a total of 72 reports as compared to the 28 reports that Ayatollah Muḥsinī had included in the original chapter of *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*.¹⁵

14 Consider the case of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'īnī who authored a book called *Fadā'il al-Qur'ān* attributing unthinkable rewards for reciting different chapters of the Qur'an but who is known to have been an 'accursed liar'. An example of his fabrication is attributing to Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) the statement: "The one who passes a whole week without reciting qul huwa allāhu aḥad [chapter 112] in it and then dies, he will have died upon the religion of Abū Lahab!" See *Thawāb al-A'māl*, p. 357, hadith 481 (*Jāmi' Ahādīth al-Shī'a*, vol. 19, p. 177, hadith 26047). In spite of this, his whole book, containing about 50 reports, was incorporated by al-Ṣadūq in successive pages in his *Thawāb al-A'māl* (beginning at hadith 374 at p. 302 and ending at hadith 490 at p. 362).

15 The chapter in *Muṣam* actually contains 42 reports, but I found 1 to be irrelevant, 10 having to do with *tahriṣ*, *ahruf*, and *qirā'āt* which is beyond the scope of this book, 1 to be about the *tafsīr* of a

Of course, I do not claim that a report left out is necessarily false (i.e. was not spoken by the Imam), or that we cannot benefit from reports whose chains are not reliable, especially on a subject such as this, in which there is good grounds for leniency;¹⁶ but at the very least, one should consider this to be a base-line of the strongest material we have on the subject and take joy in the fact that a proportion of 'their' words has been translated into good quality English.

Conventions Adapted

- I have taken the liberty of replacing the names of the Imams (e.g. Imam al-Ṣādiq (a)) for the *kunya* (e.g. Abū 'Abdillāh) which is normally used in reports. This is to facilitate identification for the reader.
- I use brackets with the letter 's' in between - (s) - to represent the honorific used for the Prophet ﷺ 'the blessings of Allah be upon him and his family' and brackets with the letter 'a' in between - (a) - to represent the honorific used for the Imams ﷺ 'upon him be peace'.

particular verse, and 2 reports to be weak-in-chain as per my judgment and therefore wrongly included by Ayatollah Muḥsinī.

16 Those who accept the principle of *tasāmuh* (leniency) believe that standards should be relaxed in the *sunan* (recommended acts) and that the one who acts on weak reports in this area will be rewarded even if the reports turn out to be untrue.

EXCURSUS: AN IMPORTANT POINT ON TRANSLATION CHOICE

We have a responsibility towards the Book of Allah which will decide our status on the Day of Judgment.

This responsibility is to act on the guidance it provides.

In order to act on it, one needs to know what is in it.

To know what is in it, one needs to be able to recite it or hear it from the one who can recite it.

I say 'recite' not 'read' because early Islamic society was semi-literate at best.

This was a time before widespread availability of writing material and knowledge was predominantly oral based.

In order to 'recite' something one had to 'learn it by heart', in other words, 'memorize it'.

Thus, the Islamic tradition put great emphasis on memorizing the Qur'an, and this is what the Prophet (s) and the Imams primarily mean when they are quoted as saying *ta'allamū al-qur'ān* 'learn the Qur'an', that is, 'learn it by heart'.

This background is crucial for arriving at the accurate translation of the phrase *man qara' al-qur'ān* which we will come across repeatedly in many reports in this book. It is usually rendered 'the one who recites the Qur'an' in a literal manner,¹⁷ but this can be – depending on the context – totally misleading, for the phrase can also connote 'the one who has memorized the Qur'an'.

This being a straightforward example of one type of etymological derivation where the word for the final outcome (in this case 'reciting') acquires the meaning of its most important preliminary step (in this case 'memorizing').

To cite a precedent of this usage:

يقال: "قد قرأ الغلام القرآن" إذا حفظه

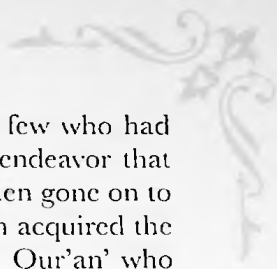
*It is said: 'The lad has **recited** the Qur'an' if he has **memorized** it.*¹⁸

Translators who lack this insight do a great disservice by failing to convey the intended meaning of relevant hadith. Their translation choice can lead modern readers, for whom the end-product 'reciting' does not necessarily entail the prerequisite stage of 'memorizing', and for whom 'reciting' by 'reading from the text' has become ubiquitous, to assume that anyone who reads the Qur'an from a written script will be deserving of the loftiest of statuses mentioned in the reports!

It is on the same note that the term *qārī al-qur'ān* (plural: *qurrā'*) when rendered literally as 'reciter(s) of the Qur'an' serves to obscure the accomplishment of the 'reciter(s)' to modern readers who may even wrongly consider themselves to be among their number.

17 For instance, Muhammad Sarwar goes with the particularly misleading 'the one who reads the Holy Qur'an' in his widely available English translation of *al-Kāfi*.

18 *Ma'ānī al-Akhbār*, pp. 532-533.



In fact, this term originally referred to the elite few who had 'learnt' the Qur'an by 'memorizing' it all - an endeavor that could take a considerable period of time - and then gone on to teach it to others by 'reciting' it for them. It soon acquired the technical sense of 'specialists/authorities on the Qur'an' who had mastered the text in all its aspects and were akin to living repositories of it. It was used synonymously with *ṣāḥib al-qur'ān* (companion of the Qur'an) and *ḥāmil al-qur'ān* (bearer of the Qur'an).

In light of this, I sometimes translate *qārī al-qur'ān* as 'memorizer of the Qur'an' (highlighting the most important and hardest part of their accomplishment) and leave it untranslated at others, as best suits the report in question.

CHAPTER I

WHAT IS THE QUR'AN?

١ - حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ
الْحَمِيرِيُّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عِيسَى بْنِ عَبْدِ الْقَطِيبِيِّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي
يُونُسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ، عَنْ الصَّادِقِ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ
مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: «إِنَّ لِلَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ حُرُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثَ لَيْسَ
مِثْلُهُنَّ شَيْءٌ - كِتَابُهُ وَ هُوَ حِكْمَتُهُ وَ نُورُهُ وَ بَيْتُهُ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً
لِلنَّاسِ لَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْ أَحَدٍ تَوَجُّهًا إِلَى غَيْرِهِ وَ عِمْرَهُ نَبِيِّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
وَ آلِهِ»

(1) Imam al-Šādiq (a) said: Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, has three inviolables, nothing can be compared to them: His Book, and it is His wisdom and light; His House, which He made a direction (qibla) for the people, and it is not acceptable for anyone to face other than towards it; and the family of your Prophet (s).¹⁹

Explanation

Nothing compares to the Qur'an which is Allah's wisdom and light. Just as the prayer of someone facing other than the qibla is not accepted, similarly, it is not accepted from one who acts on

19 Al-Šadūq's *Amālī*, p. 366, hadith 13/456; *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*, p. 216. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muʿtabara*, vol. 2, p. 375, hadith 1/1549).

the guidance of other than the Book or follows the rulings of other than the Imams.

It should not escape the attention of the reader that the Imam uses the highly significant phrase, *laysa mithlahuma shay'* (nothing can be compared to them/there is nothing like them) which is an echo of the phrase used by Allah for Himself (Qur'an 42:11). This further substantiates the connection of these three things with Allah.

It is in this same vein that we encounter a statement that has been variously attributed to the Prophet (s), different Imams, and even some companions, although there is no chain for it in our sources:

الْقُرْآنُ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ دُونَ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ وَقَرَ الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ وَقَرَ اللَّهَ وَ مَنْ لَمْ يُوقِرِ الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ اسْتَحَفَّ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ وَ حُرْمَةُ الْقُرْآنِ كَحُرْمَةِ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى وَلَدِهِ

*'The Qur'an is better than every single thing apart from Allah. So whoever honors the Qur'an, he has honored Allah. And whoever does not honor the Qur'an, he has belittled the right of Allah. The sanctity of the Qur'an is like the sanctity of the parent over their child.'*²⁰

٢ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ وَهَيْبِ بْنِ حَفْصٍ، عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: «إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ رَاجِعٌ وَ أَمْرٌ، يَأْمُرُ بِالْجَنَّةِ، وَيَرْجِعُ عَنِ النَّارِ»

(2) Abū Baṣīr said: 'I heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) say: "The Qur'an is a chaser and a caller. It calls to paradise and chases away the hellfire."²¹

20 Bihār al-Anwār, vol. 89, p. 290, hadith 4.

21 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, p. 599, hadith 9/3481. The report has a reliable chain (see: Muḥjam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara, vol. 2, p. 373, hadith 2/1542).

٣ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ يُحْيَى،
عَنْ طَلْحَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «إِنَّ هَذَا
الْقُرْآنَ فِيهِ مَنَارٌ مُهْدِي، وَمَصَابِيحُ الدُّجَى، فَلْيَجْلُ جَالِ بَصَرُهُ، وَ يَفْتَحْ
لِلضِّيَاءِ نَظْرَهُ، فَإِنَّ التَّمَكُّرَ فِيهِ حَيَاةٌ قَلْبِ الْبَصِيرِ، كَمَا يَمْشِي الْمُسْتَبِيرُ
فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ بِالنُّورِ»

(3) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'Verily this Qur'an, in it are beacons of guidance and lanterns dispelling darkness. So let the polisher polish his eyes and open up for enlightenment his sight. For reflection [on it] gives life to the heart of the insightful one the way the illuminated one walks in darkness carrying light.'²²

Explanation

The Qur'an is the light of Allah which dispels forces of darkness such as polytheism and other spiritual ailments. However, to benefit from this light one needs to ready himself to read it by 'polishing' or purifying himself, and by opening the eyes of the heart with the requisite sincerity. A heart that does not reflect on the Qur'an is deemed dead because it does not evince any signs of life such as motion from a lower level to a higher one (which is a consequence of reflection on the Qur'an).

22 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 597-598, hadith 5/3477. Muḥammad b. Aḥmad b. Yaḥyā (sic.) in the chain should be corrected to Muḥammad b. Yaḥyā who is the reliable narrator called al-Khazzāz because of numerous parallels elsewhere. While we do not have explicit strengthening of Ṭalḥa b. Zayd, the sole book attributed to him is described by al-Ṭūsī as being 'dependable'. Thus, the report would be reliable if the report originates from this book as is very likely (refer to al-Ṣadūq's chain to Ṭalḥa b. Zayd).

CHAPTER 2

WHAT WAS AND WHAT WILL BE

٤ - عَلِيٌّ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ، عَنْ سَمَاعَةَ بْنِ مِهْرَانَ، قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «إِنَّ الْعَزِيزَ الْجَبَّارَ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ كِتَابَهُ، وَهُوَ الصَّادِقُ الْبَارُّ، فِيهِ خَبَرُكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ مَنْ بَعْدَكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَلَوْ أَنَّكُمْ مِنْ يُخْبِرُكُمْ عَنْ ذَلِكَ لَتَعَجَبْتُمْ»

(4) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'Verily the All-Mighty and Most-Powerful has sent down to you His Book, and He is Truthful and Good. In it is news of you, news of those who came before you, news of those who will come after you, and news of heaven and Earth. If one were to come to you who could inform you of that you would be amazed.'²³

Explanation

Most commentators consider the 'one to come' to be the Qā'im (a) who will unlock the mysteries of the Qur'an and dive into its unfathomable depths to reveal precious gems.

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CHAPTER I

WHAT IS THE QUR'AN?

١ - حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ
 الْحَمِيرِيُّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عِيسَى بْنِ عُبَيْدٍ الْبُقَاطِيُّ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي
 يُونُسُ بْنُ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ، عَنِ الصَّادِقِ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ
 مُحَمَّدٍ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ أَنَّهُ قَالَ: «إِنَّ لِلَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ خُرُمَاتٍ ثَلَاثَ لَيْسَ
 مِثْلُهُنَّ شَيْءٌ - كِتَابُهُ وَهُوَ حِكْمَتُهُ وَ نُورُهُ وَ بَيْتُهُ الَّذِي جَعَلَهُ قِبْلَةً
 لِلنَّاسِ لَا يَقْبَلُ مِنْ أَحَدٍ تَوَجُّهًا إِلَى غَيْرِهِ وَ عِتْرَةُ نَبِيِّكُمْ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ
 وَ آلِهِ»

(1) Imam al-Šādiq (a) said: Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, has three inviolables, nothing can be compared to them: His Book, and it is His wisdom and light; His House, which He made a direction (qibla) for the people, and it is not acceptable for anyone to face other than towards it; and the family of your Prophet (s).¹⁹

Explanation

Nothing compares to the Qur'an which is Allah's wisdom and light. Just as the prayer of someone facing other than the qibla is not accepted, similarly, it is not accepted from one who acts on

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the guidance of other than the Book or follows the rulings of other than the Imams.

It should not escape the attention of the reader that the Imam uses the highly significant phrase, *laysa mithlahumna shay'* (nothing can be compared to them/there is nothing like them) which is an echo of the phrase used by Allah for Himself (Qur'an 42:11). This further substantiates the connection of these three things with Allah.

It is in this same vein that we encounter a statement that has been variously attributed to the Prophet (s), different Imams, and even some companions, although there is no chain for it in our sources:

الْقُرْآنُ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ دُونَ اللَّهِ فَمَنْ وَقَرَ الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ وَقَرَ اللَّهَ وَ مَنْ لَمْ يُوقِرِ الْقُرْآنَ فَقَدْ اسْتَحَفَّ بِحَقِّ اللَّهِ وَ حُرْمَةِ الْقُرْآنِ كَحُرْمَةِ الْوَالِدِ عَلَى وَلَدِهِ

“The Qur'an is better than every single thing apart from Allah. So whoever honors the Qur'an, he has honored Allah. And whoever does not honor the Qur'an, he has belittled the right of Allah. The sanctity of the Qur'an is like the sanctity of the parent over their child.”²⁰

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عَنْ طَلْحَةَ بْنِ زَيْدٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «إِنَّ هَذَا
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لِلضِّيَاءِ نَظْرَهُ، فَإِنَّ التَّفَكُّرَ فِيهِ حَيَاةٌ قَلْبِ الْبَصِيرِ، كَمَا يَمْشِي الْمُسْتَنِيرُ
فِي الظُّلُمَاتِ بِالنُّورِ»

(3) *Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'Verily this Qur'an, in it are beacons of guidance and lanterns dispelling darkness. So let the polisher polish his eyes and open up for enlightenment his sight. For reflection [on it] gives life to the heart of the insightful one the way the illuminated one walks in darkness carrying light.'*²²

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CHAPTER 2

WHAT WAS AND WHAT WILL BE

٤ - عَلِيٌّ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ الْمُغِيرَةِ، عَنْ سَمَاعَةَ بْنِ مِهْرَانَ، قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «إِنَّ الْعَزِيزَ الْجَبَّارَ أَنْزَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ كِتَابَهُ، وَهُوَ الصَّادِقُ الْبَارُّ، فِيهِ خَبَرُكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ مَنْ قَبْلَكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ مَنْ بَعْدَكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ، وَلَوْ أَنَّكُمْ مَنْ يُخْبِرُكُمْ عَنْ ذَلِكَ لَتَعَجَبْتُمْ»

(4) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'Verily the All-Mighty and Most-Powerful has sent down to you His Book, and He is Truthful and Good. In it is news of you, news of those who came before you, news of those who will come after you, and news of heaven and Earth. If one were to come to you who could inform you of that you would be amazed.'²³

Explanation

Most commentators consider the 'one to come' to be the Qā'im (a) who will unlock the mysteries of the Qur'an and dive into its unfathomable depths to reveal precious gems.

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٥ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ
النُّعْمَانِ، عَنْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ جَابِرٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ:
«كِتَابُ اللَّهِ فِيهِ تَبَأُ مَا قَبْلَكُمْ، وَخَبَرُ مَا بَعْدَكُمْ، وَفَصْلٌ مَا بَيْنَكُمْ،
وَنَحْنُ نَعْلَمُهُ»

(5) Imam al-Šādiq (a) said: 'The Book of Allah – in it is an account
of what came before you, a report of what will come after you, and a
decisive judgment of what is between you [of differences] – and we know
it [all].'²⁴

²⁴ Al-Kāfī, vol. 1, p. 156, hadith 9/191. The report has a
reliable chain (see: Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṣabara, vol. 1, p. 68, hadith
2/65).

CHAPTER 3

CONTENTS OF THE QUR'AN

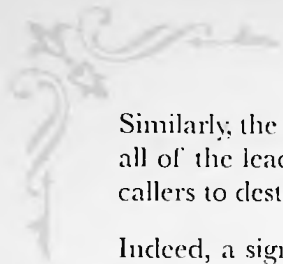
٦ - أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْجَبَّارِ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ، عَنْ
إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ، عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ: عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ:
«تَزَلَّ الْقُرْآنُ أَرْبَعَةَ أَرْبَاعٍ: رُبْعٌ فِينَا، وَرُبْعٌ فِي عَدُوِّنَا، وَرُبْعٌ سُنَنٌ وَأَمْثَالٌ،
وَرُبْعٌ فَرَائِضُ وَأَحْكَامٌ»

(6) *Imam al-Bāqir (a) said: "The Qur'an came down [as] four fourths: a quarter concerning us, a quarter concerning our enemies, a quarter regarding precedents (sunan) and similitudes (amthāl), and a quarter is regarding obligations (farā'id) and rulings (ahkām)"*²⁵.

Explanation

Some might question how a quarter of the Qur'an can be about 'them' and a quarter about 'their' enemies. It is possible that the phrase 'concerning us' includes not only the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt but all those 'like them' and 'of their clay', such as previous prophets and successors, who were callers to Allah.

25 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 659-660, hadith 4/3572. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muḥṣan al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara*, vol. 2, p. 380, hadith 1/1562).



Similarly, the phrase 'our enemies' refers in an absolute sense to all of the leaders of disbelief and enemies of Allah who were callers to destruction and rebellion throughout history.

Indeed, a significant part of the Qur'an is about 'associating' with those who were favored by Allah (and how the few who followed them were saved) and 'disassociating' from those on whom the anger of Allah was kindled (and the punishment that came to them).

CHAPTER 4

THE GREATER OF THE 'TWO WEIGHTY THINGS'

٧ - حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ الْوَلِيدِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ الصَّفَّارُ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ أَبِي الْخَطَّابِ وَ يَعْقُوبُ بْنُ يَزِيدَ جَمِيعاً عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ عَنْ مَعْرُوفِ بْنِ خَرْبُودَ عَنْ أَبِي الطُّمَيْلِ عَامِرِ بْنِ وَائِلَةَ عَنْ حُدَيْفَةَ بْنِ أَسِيدٍ الْغِفَارِيِّ قَالَ: لَمَّا رَجَعَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَ آلِهِ مِنْ حِجَّةِ الْوَدَاعِ وَ نَحْنُ مَعَهُ أَقْبَلَ حَتَّى إِشْتَهَى إِلَى الْجُحْفَةِ فَأَمَرَ أَصْحَابَهُ بِالنُّزُولِ فَتَزَلَّ الْقَوْمُ مَنَازِلَهُمْ ثُمَّ نُودِيَ بِالصَّلَاةِ فَصَلَّى بِأَصْحَابِهِ رَكَعَتَيْنِ ثُمَّ أَقْبَلَ بِوَجْهِهِ إِلَيْهِمْ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ إِنَّهُ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ اللَّطِيفُ الْخَبِيرُ أَنِّي مَيِّتٌ وَ أَنْتُمْ مَيِّتُونَ وَ كَأَنِّي قَدْ دُعِيتُ فَأَجَبْتُ وَ أَنِّي مَسْئُولٌ عَمَّا أُرْسِلْتُ بِهِ إِلَيْكُمْ وَ عَمَّا خَلَفْتُ فِيكُمْ ... أَلَا وَ إِنِّي قَرِطُكُمْ وَ أَنْتُمْ وَارِدُونَ عَلَيَّ الْخَوْضَ حَوْضِي غَدَاً وَ هُوَ حَوْضٌ غَرَضُهُ مَا بَيْنَ بَصْرَى وَ صَنْعَاءَ فِيهِ أَفْدَاخٌ مِنْ فِصَّةٍ عَدَدَ نَجُومِ السَّمَاءِ أَلَا وَ إِنِّي سَأَلْتُكُمْ غَدَاً مَاذَا صَنَعْتُمْ فِيمَا أَشْهَدْتُ اللَّهُ بِهِ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي يَوْمِكُمْ هَذَا إِذَا وَرَدْتُمْ عَلَيَّ حَوْضِي وَ مَاذَا صَنَعْتُمْ بِالتَّقْلَيْنِ مِنْ بَعْدِي فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ تَكُونُونَ خَلَفْتُمُونِي فِيهِمَا حِينَ تَلْقَوْنِي قَالُوا وَ مَا هَذَانِ التَّقْلَانِ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ قَالَ أَمَّا التَّقْلُ الْأَكْبَرُ فَكِتَابُ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَ جَلَّ سَبَبٌ مَمْدُودٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ وَ مِنِّي فِي أَيْدِيكُمْ طَرَفُهُ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ وَ الطَّرْفُ الْآخَرُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ فِيهِ عِلْمٌ مَا مَضَى وَ مَا بَقِيَ إِلَى أَنْ تَقُومَ السَّاعَةُ وَ أَمَّا التَّقْلُ الْأَصْغَرُ فَهُوَ خَلِيفَةُ الْقُرْآنِ وَ هُوَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ أَبِي طَالِبٍ وَ عِتْرَتُهُ عَلَيْهِمُ السَّلَامُ وَ إِتَهَمَا لَنْ يَفْتَرِقَا حَتَّى يَرِدَا عَلَيَّ الْخَوْضَ

(7) *Abū al-Tufayl ʿĀmir b. Wāthila from Hudhayfa b. Usayd al-Ghifārī who said: ‘When the Messenger of Allah (s) was returning from the farewell pilgrimage – and we were with him – he went forth until he reached Juhfa where he ordered his companions to dismount. So the whole company dismounted in their respective positions. Then the call for prayer was made and he led his companions in a two-unit prayer.*

‘Then he turned his face to them and said: “Verily the Kūnd and All-Aware has informed me that I am to die and you too shall die. It is as though I have been called [back] and have responded. I am to be asked about that which I was sent with for you and about what I leave behind in your midst ... Behold! I will precede you but you will meet up with me at the fountain – my fountain – tomorrow. It is a fountain whose breadth is the distance between Buṣrā and Ṣanʿā’. In it are goblets made of silver as numerous as the stars in the sky. Behold! I will ask you tomorrow about what I made Allah witness over you in this day of yours when you meet up with me at my fountain, and also about what you did to the “Two Weighty Things” after me, so take care of how you will have preserved my legacy in them when you meet me.”

‘They said: “And what are these “Two Weighty Things”, O Messenger of Allah?”

‘He said: “As for the greater weighty thing then it is the Book of Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He. A rope extending from Allah and myself in your hands, one end of it is in the hand of Allah and the other end is in your hands. In it is knowledge of what has passed and what is left until the Hour rises. As for the smaller weighty thing then it is the ally of the Qurʾān, and that is ʿAlī b. Abī Ṭālib and his descendants (a), and these two will not separate until they meet up with me at the fountain.”’²⁶

26 *Al-Khiṣāl*, vol. 1, pp. 90-92, hadith 98. The report has a **reliable** chain up to and including the sub-narrator Maʿrūf b. Kharrabūdh, who went on to authenticate its contents with the Imam. He says: ‘I presented these words to Abī Jaʿfar (a) so he said: “Abū Ṭufayl has spoken the truth – may Allah have mercy on him – we have found this speech in the book of ʿAlī (a) and do recognize it.”’ Thus the report is above reproach.

CHAPTER 5

THE QUR'AN ON THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

٨ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْحَمِيدِ، عَنْ إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ غَالِبٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «إِذَا جَمَعَ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - الْأَوَّلِينَ وَالْآخِرِينَ إِذَا هُمْ بِشَخْصٍ قَدْ أَقْبَلَ، لَمْ يَرُ قَطُّ أَحْسَنَ صُورَةً مِنْهُ، فَإِذَا نَظَرَ إِلَيْهِ الْمُؤْمِنُونَ - وَهُوَ الْقُرْآنُ - قَالُوا: هَذَا مِنَّا، هَذَا أَحْسَنُ شَيْءٍ رَأَيْنَا، فَإِذَا انْتَهَى إِلَيْهِمْ جَارَهُمْ. ثُمَّ يَنْظُرُ إِلَيْهِ الشُّهَدَاءُ، حَتَّى إِذَا انْتَهَى إِلَى آخِرِهِمْ جَارَهُمْ، فَيَقُولُونَ: هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ، فَيَجُوزُهُمْ كُلُّهُمْ حَتَّى إِذَا انْتَهَى إِلَى الْمُرْسَلِينَ، فَيَقُولُونَ: هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ، فَيَجُوزُهُمْ حَتَّى يَنْتَهِيَ إِلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ، فَيَقُولُونَ: هَذَا الْقُرْآنُ، فَيَجُوزُهُمْ، ثُمَّ يَنْتَهِيَ حَتَّى يَقِفَ عَنِ يَمِينِ الْعَرْشِ، فَيَقُولُ الْجَبَّارُ: وَعِزَّتِي وَجَلَالِي وَارْتِفَاعِ مَكَانِي، لَأَكْرِمَنَّ الْيَوْمَ مَنْ أَكْرَمَكَ، وَلَأَهَيِّنَنَّ مَنْ أَهَانَكَ»

(8) Imam al-Şâdiq (a) said: 'When Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, gathers the first [generations] and the last, they will behold a person drawing near, a more handsome form than his has never been seen [before]. When the believers will gaze at him, they will say: "This is one of us! This is the most handsome thing we have seen!" But when he reaches them, he will go beyond them. Then the martyrs will gaze at him, until when he reaches the last of them - he will go beyond them; they will say: "This is the Qur'an!" He will go beyond them all until he reaches

*the messengers; they will say: "This is the Qur'an!" He will go beyond them until he reaches the angels; they will say: "This is the Qur'an!" He will go beyond them, until he comes to stand on the right side of the Throne, whereupon the Most-Powerful will proclaim: "By My might and majesty, and the loftiness of My position, I will honor today the one who honored you, and debase the one who debased you!"*²⁷

Explanation

We know that our deeds and other spiritual entities will be personified on the Day of Judgment and appear in physical form. This is the implication of the verse: "So whoever does an atom's weight of good will **see it**, and whoever does an atom's weight of evil will **see it**" (Qur'an 99:7-8).

The status of the Qur'an is incomparable to anything else. It makes sense, then, to encounter reports speaking of the form that the Qur'an will assume on that day and the central role it will play in the events that will occur.

We discover from this report how the people on the Day of Judgment will be arranged in ascending order with those closest to Allah being closest to the Throne (Believers -> Martyrs -> Messengers -> Bearers of the Throne). The Qur'an will start out at the very back and pass beyond them all until it comes to stand on the 'right side of the Throne'. The people's fate will depend on their relationship with the Qur'an and how they dealt with it.

Consider also how the believers could not recognize this person, the martyrs could only recognize him after he had passed beyond them, while the messengers and angels recognized him immediately. In this there is an allusion to the differing levels of intimacy one enjoyed with the Qur'an in this world.

May Allah save us from separation from His Book!

27 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pp. 603-604, hadith 14/3486. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: Mu'jam al-Ahādīth al-Mu'tabara, vol. 2, pp. 373-374, hadith 3/1543).

CHAPTER 6

RECITE AND ASCEND!

٩ - وَبِإِسْنَادِهِ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: تَعْلَمُوا الْقُرْآنَ؛ فَإِنَّهُ يَأْتِي يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ صَاحِبَهُ فِي صُورَةِ شَابٍ جَمِيلٍ شَاحِبِ اللَّوْنِ، فَيَقُولُ لَهُ: أَنَا الْقُرْآنُ الَّذِي كُنْتُ أَسْهَرْتُ لَيْلَكَ، وَأَظْمَأْتُ هَوَاجِرَكَ، وَأَجْفَقْتُ رِيَقَكَ، وَأَسَلْتُ دَمْعَكَ، أَوَّلَ مَعَكَ حَيْثُمَا أَلْتَ، وَكُلُّ تَاجِرٍ مِنْ وَرَاءِ تِجَارَتِهِ، وَأَنَا الْيَوْمَ لَكَ مِنْ وَرَاءِ تِجَارَةِ كُلِّ تَاجِرٍ، وَسَيَأْتِيكَ كَرَامَةٌ مِنَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، فَأَبْشِرْ، فَيُؤْتِي بَتَاجٍ، فَيُوضَعُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ، وَيُعْطَى الْأَمَانُ بِيَمِينِهِ، وَالْخُلْدُ فِي الْجَنَانِ بِيَسَارِهِ، وَيُكْسَى خُلْتَيْنِ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: اقْرَأْ وَارْقُءْ، فَكَلَّمَا قَرَأَ آيَةً صَعِدَ دَرَجَةً، وَيُكْسَى أَبُوهُ خُلْتَيْنِ إِنْ كَانَ مُؤْمِنِينَ، ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُمَا: هَذَا لِمَا عَلَّمْتُمَا الْقُرْآنَ»

(9) The Messenger of Allah (s) said: 'Learn the Qur'an, for it will come to its companion [i.e. the one who learnt it] on the Day of Judgment in the form of a handsome youth, pale in color, and will say to him: "I am the Qur'an who used to keep awake your nights, make thirsty your mid-days, dry up your saliva, and cause your tears to flow. I will turn with you wherever you turn, for every merchant is after [profit for] his merchandise and I will be with you today the way the merchant is with [his] merchandise. There will come to you an honor from Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, so receive glad tidings."

'Then a crown will be brought and placed on his head, and he will be given the writ of security in his right hand, and the writ to eternity in the

gardens [of paradise] in his left hand, and he will be attired with two robes.

"Then it will be said to him: "Recite and ascend!", so every time he recites a verse he ascends a level.

"His two parents will also be attired with two robes if they are believers, then it will be said to them both: "This is because you [two] taught him the Qur'an.""²⁸

Explanation

'Learn the Qur'an' means 'learn it by heart' as is supported by the last part of the report where the companion of the Qur'an will be asked to recite what he knows of the Qur'an from memory and ascend.

'Because you [two] taught him the Qur'an' covers both direct teaching and arranging for it so that the child be taught through an intermediary.

We will encounter the world hereafter to be a perfect realization of our life in this world. Thus, the one who made the Qur'an his constant companion and source of solace in this world will find the Qur'an to be a loyal and unshakable partner in the hereafter.

The Prophet (s) uses an example that is easy for profit-seekers all over the world to understand. On one level, in the case of small merchants, one literally puts the stall in front of him in the market. A street hawker walks behind his goods. Thus, the

28 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 605-606, hadith 3/3489. The chain of this report is identical to the report that precedes it and which has a **reliable** chain, i.e. a number of our companions -> Ahmad b. Muḥammad and Sahl b. Ziyād together -> Ibn Maḥbūb -> Jamāl b. Ṣāliḥ -> al-Fuḍayl b. Yaṣār (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara*, vol. 2, pp. 375-376, hadith 2/-). It is not clear why Muḥsinī does not give this report a running number in his count of reliable reports. Either he has already given it somewhere else and this is only a duplicate, or he has some reservations about whether we can reconstruct the chain as has been intimated above.

Qur'an will give precedence to the one who learnt it by walking behind him/her and guarding it, the way a merchant attends to his merchandise, to the end of the journey.

But on another level, what the merchant is 'after' in the case of his merchandise is seeking profit for it. Businessmen many a time put their businesses in front of them, in the sense of giving it priority over their own selves. One identifies with his merchandise and wants the best for it. Consider the sheer time, effort, and attention that a businessman pays to bring his investment to fruition. This is the attitude that the Qur'an will have with one who devoted himself to it.

Of course, with the role-reversal that is typical of the dichotomy between the two worlds, for the one who invested in the Qur'an in this world, it turns out that the Qur'an will consider him its investment in that world and demand more for it from the Ultimate Buyer.

May the Qur'an take us by the hand, intercede for us in front of the Merciful Judge, and lead us to eternal bliss!

١٠ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ جَمِيعاً،
عَنِ ابْنِ مَجْبُوبٍ، عَنْ جَمِيلِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ، عَنِ الْفَضِيلِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ: عَنْ
أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «الْحَافِظُ لِلْقُرْآنِ الْعَامِلُ بِهِ مَعَ السَّفَرَةِ
الْكِرَامِ الْبَرَّةِ»

(10) Imam al-Šādiq (a) said: 'The one who has memorized the Qur'an and acts upon it is with the honorable and virtuous scribes.'²⁹

29 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pp. 604-605, hadith 2/3488. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara, vol. 2, p. 374, hadith 4/1544).

Explanation

The word *hifz* connotes 'protection' and 'preservation' and the one who has memorized the Qur'an is called *hāfiẓ al-qur'ān* because he has 'protected' and 'preserved' the Qur'an from tampering, and indeed this was how the Qur'an came down to us, for it refers to itself as being 'clarifying verses [residing] in the chests of those who have been given knowledge' (Qur'an 29:49).

The human memorizer of the Qur'an who transmits it orally on Earth is grouped together with the honorable and virtuous scribes, an allusion to the angels referred to in Qur'an 80:15-16, whose 'hands' were responsible for safe-keeping the original Qur'an.

Of course, memorizing by itself is not enough without the condition of 'acting upon it' as the Imam makes explicit. Indeed, all the reports in this chapter that speak of the reward of the 'memorizer of the Qur'an' should be read with this condition in mind. For what use is there in preserving the outer form of the Qur'an if one does not preserve its inner form, i.e. its message?!

I have included this report here because it is a truncated version of the much larger report below.

١١ - ابن محبوب، عن مالك بن عطيّة، عن منتهال القصاب: عن أبي عبد الله عليه السلام، قال: «مَنْ قرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ - وَهُوَ شَابٌّ مُؤْمِنٌ - اخْتَلَطَ الْقُرْآنُ بِلَحْمِهِ وَدَمِهِ، وَجَعَلَهُ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - مَعَ السَّفَرَةِ الْكِرَامِ الْبَرَةِ، وَكَانَ الْقُرْآنُ حَجِيرًا عَنْهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ، يَقُولُ: يَا رَبِّ، إِنَّ كُلَّ عَامِلٍ قَدْ أَصَابَ أَجْرَ عَمَلِهِ غَيْرِ عَامِلِي، فَبَلِّغْ بِهِ أَكْرَمَ عَطَايَاكَ».

قَالَ: «فَيَكْسُوهُ اللَّهُ الْعَزِيزُ الْجَبَّارُ حُلَّتَيْنِ مِنْ حُلْلِ الْجَنَّةِ، وَيُوضَعُ عَلَى رَأْسِهِ تَاجُ الْكَرَامَةِ، ثُمَّ يَقَالُ لَهُ: هَلْ أَرْضَيْتَكَ فِيهِ؟ فَيَقُولُ الْقُرْآنُ: يَا رَبِّ، قَدْ كُنْتُ أَرْغَبُ لَهُ فِيمَا هُوَ أَفْضَلُ مِنْ هَذَا، فَيُعْطَى الْأَمْنُ

بَيْمِينِهِ، وَالْخُلْدَ يَسَارِهِ، ثُمَّ يَدْخُلُ الْجَنَّةَ، فَيُقَالُ لَهُ: اقْرَأْ وَاصْعَدْ دَرَجَةً،
 ثُمَّ يُقَالُ لَهُ: هَلْ بَلَّغْنَا بِهِ (بَلَّغْنَاكَ) وَأَرْضَيْنَاكَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: تَعَمُّ. قَالَ:
 «وَمَنْ قَرَأَهُ كَثِيرًا، وَتَعَاهَدَهُ مَشَقَّةً مِنْ شِدَّةِ حِفْظِهِ، أَعْطَاهُ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ
 وَجَلَّ - أَجْرَ هَذَا مَرَّتَيْنِ»

(11) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'Whoever memorizes the Qur'an as a believing youth, the Qur'an mixes with his flesh and blood. Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, places him among the honorable and virtuous angelic scribes, and the Qur'an acts as his advocate on the Day of Judgment. He [i.e. the Qur'an] will say: "O Lord, every worker has obtained the reward of his work except my worker, so make him attain the most generous of Your grants!" Thus Allah, the All-Mighty and Most-Powerful, will attire him [i.e. the youthful memorizer] in two robes from the robes of paradise and place the crown of honor on his head. Then it will be said to him [i.e. the Qur'an]: "Have We pleased you through [how We have dealt with] him?" But the Qur'an will say: "O Lord, I used to hope for him that which is better than this." So he [i.e. the youthful memorizer] will be granted the writ of security in his right, and the writ of eternity in his left, then he will enter paradise and it will be said to him: "Recite and ascend a level!" Then it will be said to him [i.e. the Qur'an]: "Have We met [your expectations] and pleased you?" He [i.e. the Qur'an] will say: "Yes!"

He [i.e. the Imam] then said: 'And whoever re-memorizes it again and again and refreshes it regularly with great difficulty [on his part] because of his weak memory, Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, will give him double the reward of this.'³⁰

Explanation

Youth age has been singled out as the most auspicious time for this endeavor of memorizing the Qur'an because it is the

30 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pp. 606-607, hadith 4/3490. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter Minhāl al-Qaṣṣāb whose status is unknown. I have included it because each of its individual units is corroborated by previous reliable reports in this chapter.

formative period wherein someone is nearing the peak of their powers in physical terms, while at the same time distractions abound. A youth who ignores the surrounding clamor and applies his strength and energy to the Qur'an finds that it has become a part of his very constitution as it were, never to separate from him thereafter.

A person with 'weak memory' will have to work extra hard to memorize parts of the Qur'an and that is why he will have double the reward.

This last statement of the Imam has been transmitted independently as below:

١٢ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَهْلِ بْنِ زَيْدٍ جَمِيعًا، عَنْ ابْنِ مَحْبُوبٍ، عَنْ جَمِيلِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ، عَنِ الْفَضِيلِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: «إِنَّ الَّذِي يُعَالِجُ الْقُرْآنَ، وَيَحْفَظُهُ بِمَشَقَّةٍ مِنْهُ وَقَلَّةٍ حِفْظٍ، لَهُ أَجْرَانِ»

(12) *Al-Fudayl b. Yasār* said: 'I heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) say: "The one who labors over the Qur'an and memorizes it with great difficulty on his part and in spite of having poor memory will have double the reward."³¹

١٣ - قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فِي وَصِيَّتِهِ لِابْنِهِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ الْحَنَفِيَّةِ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ «يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تَقُلْ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُ بَلْ لَا تَقُلْ كُلَّ مَا تَعْلَمُ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ تَبَارَكَ وَتَعَالَى قَدْ فَرَضَ عَلَى جَوَارِحِكَ كُلِّهَا فَرَائِضَ يَحْتَجُّ بِهَا عَلَيْكَ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ ... وَ عَلَيْكَ بِقِرَاءَةِ الْقُرْآنِ وَ الْعَمَلِ بِمَا فِيهِ وَ لُزُومِ فَرَائِضِهِ وَ شَرَائِعِهِ وَ حَلَالِهِ وَ حَرَامِهِ وَ أَمْرِهِ وَ نَهْيِهِ وَ التَّهَجُّدِ بِهِ وَ تِلَاوَتِهِ فِي لَيْلِكَ وَ تَهَارِكَ ... وَ إَعْلَمُ أَنَّ دَرَجَاتِ الْجَنَّةِ عَلَى عَدَدِ آيَاتِ

31 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 612-613, hadith 1/3498. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣṣaḥ al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 2, p. 374, hadith 5/1545).

الْقُرْآنِ فَإِذَا كَانَ يَوْمُ الْقِيَامَةِ يُقَالُ لِقَارِي الْقُرْآنِ اقْرَأْ وَ ارْقَ فَلَا يَكُونُ فِي
الْجَنَّةِ بَعْدَ النَّبِيِّينَ وَ الْأَصْدِيقِينَ أَرْفَعُ دَرَجَةً مِنْهُ»

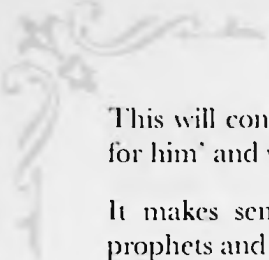
(13) *The Commander of the Faithful (a) said in his final will and testament to his son, Muḥammad b. al-Ḥanafiyya, may Allah be pleased with him: 'O my son, do not speak that which you do not know; in fact, do not speak all that which you know, for Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, has obligated on each and every one of your limbs obligations which He will hold as proof against you on the Day of Judgment ... And upon you is the recitation of the Qur'an, acting upon what is contained in it, adhering to its obligations (farā'id) and laws (sharā'i'), its permissible (halāl) and forbidden (ḥarām), its commands (amr) and prohibitions (nahy), standing in worship with it and reciting it in your nights and days ... Know that the number of levels in paradise corresponds to the number of verses in the Qur'an. So when it will be the Day of Judgment it will be said to the memorizer of the Qur'an: "Recite and ascend!" Thus, there will not be in paradise, after the prophets and truthful (ṣiddiqīn), a level higher than his.'*³²

Explanation

A number of reports assert that paradise has as many levels as there are verses in the Qur'an.³³ A believer will enter paradise and find himself at the lowest level therein. He will then be instructed to 'Recite and ascend'. He will ascend a level for every verse he is able to recite. The ultimate level he attains will be in accordance with 'the last verse that he knows/recites'.

32 *Man Lā Yaḥdiruhu al-Faqīh*, vol. 2, pp. 626-628, hadith 1/3218. Al-Ṣadūq gives his chain to this *waṣīyya* at the end of the book (vol. 4, p. 513). The chain (i.e. al-Ṣadūq's father -> 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm b. Hāshim -> his father -> Ḥammād b. 'Isā -> the one he mentioned -> al-Ṣādiq (a)) is disconnected, all its narrators are reliable except that there is an unnamed intermediary between Ḥammād and the Imam.

33 See hadiths 9 and 11 in this book. Consider also the same phrasing in weak reports such as: *al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 601, hadith 11/3483; *al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 611, hadith 10/3496; al-Ṣadūq's *Amālī*, pp. 440-441, hadith 10/586; *Biḥār al-Anwār*, vol. 89, p. 22, hadith 22, among others.



This will continue until every person reaches the level 'that is for him' and which he has worked for.

It makes sense, then, to find that no one - excepting the prophets and truthful - will have a higher level in paradise than the memorizer of the Qur'an. This is because such a person, having memorized the whole Qur'an, will keep reciting and ascending without stopping midway.

CHAPTER 7

I WOULD HAVE ELEVATED YOU!

١٤ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ أَبِي الْمَغْرَاءِ، عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «مَنْ نَسِيَ سُورَةً مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، مُثَلَّثَ لَهُ فِي صُورَةٍ حَسَنَةٍ، وَدَرَجَةٍ رَفِيعَةٍ فِي الْجَنَّةِ، فَإِذَا رَأَاهَا، قَالَ: مَا أَنْتَ؟ مَا أَحْسَنْكَ! لَيْتَكَ لِي! فَتَقُولُ: أَمَا تَعْرِفُنِي؟ أَنَا سُورَةُ كَذَا وَكَذَا، وَلَوْ لَمْ تَنْسِنِي لَرَفَعْتُكَ إِلَى هَذَا»

(14) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'The one who forgets a chapter from the Qur'an, she will appear to him in a beautiful form and on an elevated level in paradise, so when he sees her he will say: "What are you? How beautiful you are! If only you were mine!" She will say: "Don't you know me? I am such-and-such chapter, and if you had not forgotten me, I would have elevated you to this [level]."' ³⁴

34 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pp. 614-615, hadith 2/3502. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: Muṣṣam al-Aḥādith al-Muṭabara, vol. 2, p. 374, hadith 1/1546). See 'Iqāb al-Aṣṣmā', pp. 100-101, hadith 148 for the same report with a different lower chain and very slight differences in wording, for instance, the man will ask the embodied chapter 'man anti' or 'who are you?'

Explanation

The feminine mode is used to refer to the 'chapter from the Qur'an' in some reports, like this one, to indicate that it will take the form of a beautiful woman.

١٥ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ؛ وَأَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْجَبَّارِ جَمِيعاً، عَنْ ابْنِ فَضَّالٍ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ ثَعْلَبَةَ بْنِ مَيْمُونٍ، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ الْأَحْمَرِ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ، إِنِّي كُنْتُ قَرَأْتُ الْقُرْآنَ فَتَقَلَّتْ مِنِّي، فَأَدْعُ اللَّهَ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - أَنْ يُعَلِّمَنِيهِ، قَالَ: فَكَأَنَّهُ فَرَعَ لِدَلِّكَ، فَقَالَ: «عَلَّمَكَ اللَّهُ هُوَ وَإِنَّا جَمِيعاً» قَالَ: وَنَحْنُ نَحْوُ مِنْ عَشْرَةٍ. ثُمَّ قَالَ: «السُّورَةُ تَكُونُ مَعَ الرَّجُلِ قَدْ قَرَأَهَا، ثُمَّ تَرْكَهَا، فَتَأْتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِي أَحْسَنِ صُورَةٍ، وَتُسَلِّمُ عَلَيْهِ، فَيَقُولُ: مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: أَنَا سُورَةٌ كَذَا وَكَذَا، فَيَقُولُ: أَلَمْ تَكُنْ تَمَسِّكُ بِي، وَأَخَذْتَ بِي، لِأَتَزَلَّتْ هَذِهِ الدَّرَجَةُ؛ فَعَلَيْكُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ» ثُمَّ قَالَ: «إِنَّ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ لِيُقَالَ: فَلَانٌ قَارِئٌ، وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ لِيَطْلُبَ بِهِ الدُّنْيَا، وَلَا خَيْرَ فِي ذَلِكَ، وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ لِيَنْتَفِعَ بِهِ فِي صَلَاتِهِ وَلَيْلِهِ وَنَهَارِهِ»

(15) Ya'qub al-Ahmar said: 'I said to Imam al-Sadiq (a): "May I be made your ransom. I had memorized the Qur'an but it has slipped away from me, so pray to Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, that He teaches it to me [again]." It was as though he [the Imam] became alarmed due to that. Then he [the Imam] said: "May Allah teach it to you and to all of us." We were about ten men [gathered around him]. Then he said: "A chapter remains with a man who has memorized it, then he abandons it, so she comes to him on the Day of Judgment in the best form and greets him. He will say: 'Who are you?' She will say: 'I am such-and-such chapter, if you had held fast to me and grasped me, I would have settled you on this level.' So upon you is the Qur'an!"

'Then he [the Imam] said: "Among people is one who memorizes the Qur'an so that it may be said 'so and so is a reciter'. And among them is one who memorizes the Qur'an to seek by it the world, but there is no good

in that. And among them is one who memorizes the Qur'an so as to benefit from it in his prayers, and in his nights and days."³⁵

Explanation

Let the reader pause for a moment and reflect on the alarm that the Imam felt at hearing Ya'qūb's words. It is the alarm one feels at hearing a beloved has incurred a huge loss by letting go of something precious which was in his grasp.

The Imam's advice for the ten gathered with him there on that day and no doubt to the rest of his followers is 'upon you is the Qur'an!', that is, this Qur'an has been imposed on you and it is required of you to hold on to it and bear its burden, by learning it and then not abandoning it or forgetting it.³⁶

However, one should not seek by this endeavor to attain a cheap return like 'renown' or the 'world'; rather, one should seek to attain the ultimate reward.

35 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 613-614, hadith 1/3501. I would consider this report to be **reliable**. All the narrators in the chain are unassailably reliable with the exception of the primary transmitter, Ya'qūb al-Aḥmar. If the latter is identical to Ya'qūb b. Sālim al-Aḥmar, as is very likely, then he would be reliable according to the manuscript of al-Najāshī that was reportedly available to Ibn Tāwūs, even if his entry is not found in the manuscripts of al-Najāshī that have come down to us. Ayatollah Muḥsinī knows of this line of reasoning but is ultimately non-committal, choosing to make *tawāqquf* (suspended judgment) as regards his status and treat his reports with *iḥtiyāṭ* (caution) which he defines as 'acting (upon the contents of the report) without attributing it to the Imams' instead of outright dismissal as he would ordinary do (see: *Buḥūth fi 'Ilm al-Rijāl*, p. 446 and pp. 148-151; *Al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabaraa fi Jāmi' Ahādīth al-Shī'a*, pp. 319-320). This explains why this report and the two that come after are, wrongly in my opinion, not included in *Muṣṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabaraa*.

36 I derive this from the extra word *fata'allamūhu* at this juncture found in a version of this report (see hadith 16).

١٦ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدَ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ وَالْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ جَمِيعاً، عَنِ النَّضْرِ بْنِ سُوَيْدٍ، عَنْ يَحْيَى الْحَلْبِيِّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُسْكَانَ، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ الْأَحْمَرِ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ، إِنَّهُ أَصَابَنِي هُمُومٌ وَأَشْيَاءٌ لَمْ يَثِقْ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الْخَيْرِ إِلَّا وَقَدْ تَفَلَّتْ مِنِّي مِنْهُ طَائِفَةٌ حَتَّى الْقُرْآنَ، لَقَدْ تَفَلَّتْ مِنِّي طَائِفَةٌ مِنْهُ، قَالَ: فَفَرِّعْ عِنْدَ ذَلِكَ حِينَ ذَكَرْتَ الْقُرْآنَ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: «إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَسْئِلُ السُّورَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، فَتَأْتِيهِ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى تُشْرَفَ عَلَيْهِ مِنْ دَرَجَةٍ مِنْ بَعْضِ الدَّرَجَاتِ، فَيَقُولُ: السَّلَامُ عَلَيْكَ، فَيَقُولُ: وَعَلَيْكَ السَّلَامُ، مَنْ أَنْتَ؟ فَيَقُولُ: أَنَا سُورَةٌ كَذَا وَكَذَا، ضَيَعْتَنِي وَتَرَكْتَنِي، أَمَا لَوْ تَمَسَّكَتْ بِي بَلَعْتُ بِكَ هَذِهِ الدَّرَجَةَ». ثُمَّ أَشَارَ بِإصْبَعِهِ، ثُمَّ قَالَ: «عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْقُرْآنِ، فَتَعَلَّمُوهُ؛ فَإِنَّ مِنَ النَّاسِ مَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُ الْقُرْآنَ لِيُقَالَ: فُلَانٌ قَارِئٌ؛ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُهُ، فَيَطْلُبُ بِهِ الصَّوْتُ، فَيُقَالَ: فُلَانٌ حَسَنُ الصَّوْتِ، وَلَيْسَ فِي ذَلِكَ خَيْرٌ؛ وَمِنْهُمْ مَنْ يَتَعَلَّمُهُ، فَيَقُومُ بِهِ فِي لَيْلِهِ وَتَهَارِهِ لَا يَبَالِي مَنْ عَلِمَ ذَلِكَ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْلَمْهُ»

(16) Ya'qūb al-Ahmar said: 'I said to Imam al-Sādiq (a): "May I be made your ransom, I have become afflicted with worries and other [weighty] things such that nothing of good has remained except that a large portion of it has escaped from me, even the Qur'an, a large portion of it has escaped from me [i.e. I have forgotten a greater part of it]."'

He [Ya'qūb] said: 'So he [the Imam] became alarmed at that, when I mentioned the Qur'an. Then he said: "A man forgets a chapter from the Qur'an, so she approaches him on the Day of Judgment until she is looking down at him from a [higher] level among the different levels [of paradise] and says: 'Peace be upon you,' he will say: 'And upon you be peace; who are you?' She will say: 'I am such-and-such chapter, you misplaced me and abandoned me, if you had held on to me I would have made you reach this level,'" and he [the Imam] gestured with his finger [above him].

"Then he [the Imam] said: "Upon you is the Qur'an – so learn it. For there is among people one who learns the Qur'an so that it may be said 'so-and-so is a reciter'. And among them is one who learns it and seeks by it voice so that it may be said 'so-and-so has a good voice', but there is no

good in that. And among them is one who learns it and stands with it [for prayer] in his nights and his days, he does not care who knows [that he has memorized the Qur'an] or does not."³⁷

Explanation

It is clear that this is a version of the same incident described earlier (hadith 15).

We come to know the reason behind Ya'qūb forgetting parts of the Qur'an: his mind was occupied with worry, among other useful additions which a careful reader will have no doubt noticed, such as the more detailed interaction between the personified 'chapter' and the misfortunate 'forgetter'.

We 'misplace' something when we don't pay sufficient attention to it thereby allowing it to get lost, the 'chapter' has every right, therefore, to complain that it was 'abandoned', that is, one neglected to practice it until it faded away from memory.

The one who 'memorizes the Qur'an to seek by it the world' in the previous report is described here as doing this by concentrating on his voice so that everyone can come to know of his 'good voice'.

How rare it is to come across the sincerity alluded to where one 'does not care' whether the people know of his accomplishment or not! This is the learner in whose learning there is much 'good'.

١٧ - ابْنُ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْحَمِيدِ، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ الْأَحْمَرِ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِنَّ عَلَيَّ دَيْنًا كَثِيرًا، وَقَدْ دَخَلَنِي مَا كَانَ الْقُرْآنُ يَتَقَلَّبُ مِنِّي. فَقَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «الْقُرْآنَ الْقُرْآنَ؛ إِنَّ الْآيَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ وَالسُّورَةَ لَتَجِيءُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ حَتَّى

37 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 616-617, hadith 6/3506. The report has a **reliable** chain.

تَصْعَدُ أَلْفَ دَرَجَةٍ - يَعْنِي فِي الْجَنَّةِ - فَتَقُولُ: لَوْ حَفِظْتُني لَبَلَّغْتَ بِكَ
هَاهُنَا»

(17) Ya'qūb al-Aḥmar said: 'I said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (a): "I have a lot of debts [to repay], and there has entered me [a state of worry] which causes the Qur'an to escape from me." So Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: "[Hold to] the Qur'an! [Hold to] the Qur'an! A verse from the Qur'an and a chapter will come on the Day of Judgment until she ascends a thousand levels, in paradise, and will then say: 'If you had memorized me I would have made you reach here.'"³⁸

Explanation

This is a restated summary of the same incident as found in hadiths 15 and 16.³⁹

Another piece of the puzzle is filled in when Ya'qūb's worries are identified as having to do with financial matters and the daily grind of life. Continued memorization of large texts requires constant review and the Qur'an is particularly tricky in this regard, 'easier for it to slip away than a hobbled camel' as a number of reports state.⁴⁰

One needs to give it one's constant attention, but then again, nothing compares to it and nothing less will do. The one who prioritizes it over banal matters will win in the end.

38 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 615, hadith 3/3503. The report has a **reliable** chain. The intermediaries between Kulaynī and Ibn Abi 'Umayr are truncated in this instance but can be discovered by studying the chain of the previous report. They are: 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm -> his father.

39 These three reports are a perfect case study to demonstrate the extent of divergences that can occur in oral transmission. Some of these can be pinned on the natural vagaries that affect this mode, such as forgetfulness on the part of narrators, but it is mostly down to the leeway that a transmitter had when recounting an incident non-verbatim without losing its essence, which has been mostly preserved here.

40 *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, hadiths 789a; 790a; 790b; 791.

CHAPTER 8

BUT WHAT IF I FORGET?

١٨ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ، عَنْ سَعِيدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ الْأَعْرَجِ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنِ الرَّجُلِ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ، ثُمَّ يَنْسَاهُ، ثُمَّ يَقْرُؤُهُ، ثُمَّ يَنْسَاهُ، أَعَلَيْهِ فِيهِ حَرْجٌ؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا»

(18) Sa'īd b. Abdallāh al-A'raj said: 'I asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) about a man who memorizes the Qur'an, then he forgets, then he memorizes it [again], then he forgets -- is there any sin on him because of this? He replied: "No."'"

١٩ - أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ، عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنِ الْعَبَّاسِ بْنِ عَامِرٍ، عَنِ الْحَجَّاجِ الْحُسَّابِ، عَنْ أَبِي كَهْمَسٍ الْهَيْثَمِيِّ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامَ عَنِ رَجُلٍ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ، ثُمَّ نَسِيَهُ، فَرَدَّدْتُ عَلَيْهِ ثَلَاثًا، أَعَلَيْهِ فِيهِ حَرْجٌ؟ قَالَ: «لَا»

(19) Abū Kahmas al-Haytham b. Ubayd said: 'I asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) about a man who has memorized the Qur'an, then he forgets it, and

41 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, p. 672, hadith 25/3593. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣṣaḥ al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'abara*, vol. 2, p. 376, hadith 3/1550).

*repeated this [sequence] for him thrice, is there any sin on him because of this? He replied: "No."*⁴²

Explanation

With the emphasis that the Imams put on memorizing the Qur'an, it comes as no surprise to find multiple companions asking them this question: do we sin by forgetting?

While it is true that a man who forgets a part of the Qur'an that he had memorized will lose out on a higher degree in paradise, this is not the same as being punished for it, especially if this is caused by factors beyond one's control, such as a natural deterioration of memory with age, as is perhaps indicated in the reports which have an individual striving to retain memory but failing repeatedly.

⁴² *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, p. 616, hadith 5/3505. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except al-Haytham b. 'Ubayd ('Abdallāh) whose status is unknown.

CHAPTER 9

THREE TYPES OF RECITERS

٢٠ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ حَالِدٍ، عَنْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ مِهْرَانَ، عَنْ عُثَيْسِ بْنِ هِشَامٍ، عَمَّنْ ذَكَرَهُ: عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «قُرَّاءُ الْقُرْآنِ ثَلَاثَةٌ: رَجُلٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ، فَأَتَّخَذَهُ بَضَاعَةً، وَاسْتَدَرَّ بِهِ الْمُلُوكَ، وَاسْتَطَالَ بِهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ؛ وَرَجُلٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ، فَحَفِظَ حُرُوفَهُ، وَضَيَّعَ حُدُودَهُ، وَأَقَامَهُ إِقَامَةَ الْقِدْحِ، فَلَا كَثْرَ اللَّهُ هَؤُلَاءِ مِنْ حَمَلَةِ الْقُرْآنِ؛ وَرَجُلٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ، فَوَضَعَ دَوَاءَ الْقُرْآنِ عَلَى دَاءِ قَلْبِهِ، فَأَسْهَرَ بِهِ لَيْلَهُ، وَأَظْمَأَ بِهِ نَهَارَهُ، وَقَامَ بِهِ فِي مَسَاجِدِهِ، وَتَحَافَى بِهِ عَنْ فِرَاشِهِ، فَبِأَوْلَيْكَ يَدْفَعُ اللَّهُ الْعَزِيرُ الْجَبَّارُ الْبَلَاءَ، وَبِأَوْلَيْكَ يُدِيلُ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - مِنَ الْأَعْدَاءِ، وَبِأَوْلَيْكَ يُنَزِّلُ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - الْغَيْثَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ، فَوَ اللَّهُ هَؤُلَاءِ فِي قُرَّاءِ الْقُرْآنِ أَعَزُّ مِنَ الْكَبِيرَةِ الْأَحْمَرِ»

(20) Imam al-Bāqir (a) said: 'The reciters (qurrā') of the Qur'an are three: a man who memorized the Qur'an so he takes it to be merchandise, attracts by it the rulers, and gains ascendancy through it over the masses. A man who memorized the Qur'an so he preserves its letters but neglects its bounds, and treats it the way one does a drinking-cup - may Allah not increase such ones among the bearers of the Qur'an! A man who memorized the Qur'an so he applies the ointment of the Qur'an over the ailment of his heart. He keeps awake by it his nights, parches by it his days, stands [reciting] with it in his places of worship, and abandons

for it his bed. Because of them does Allah, the All-Mighty and Most-Powerful, avert tribulations, because of them does Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, grant victory over enemies, and because of them does Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, send down rain from the sky. I swear by Allah that such ones among the reciters of the Qur'an are rarer than Red Sulphur!⁴³

Explanation

The word *qurrā'* rendered here as 'reciters' refers to an elite class of men who had 'learnt' the Qur'an for a considerable period of time, 'memorized' it, and begun teaching it to others, thus we see the Imam equating them with the *ḥamalat al-qur'ān* or 'bearers of the Qur'an' (see the Excursus).

The first reciter sees in the Qur'an a means to secure his advantage and trades it away for the cheaply price of worldly profit or enhanced reputation.

The second reciter excels in the outward form of the Qur'an, such as possessing perfect recall of each and every letter when reciting from memory, adhering to the rules of recitation and reciting in a beautiful voice, but does not put its message into practice. He 'treats it the way one does a drinking-cup' because the Arab desert traveller would tie all his luggage onto the camel first before suspending the *qadah* or drinking-cup last, as if it were a second thought. In the same way, such a reciter does not give the Qur'an precedence and is guilty of 'casting it behind his back'.

43 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 658, hadith 1/3569; *al-Khiṣāl*, vol. 1, p. 170, hadith 164. The chain is disconnected because the intermediary who heard this from the Imam is not named. However, Ayatollah Muḥsinī considered the report to be reliable because a version of this same report (see: al-Ṣadūq's *Amālī*, pp. 269-270, hadith 18/297) has 'more than one' hearing it from the Imam (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara*, vol. 2, p. 379, hadith 10/1559). Their plurality is enough to give confidence even if they remain anonymous.

The word can also be read as *qidh* (instead of *qadali*) which means the wooden rod of an arrow before it has been furnished with feathers and a head. In this interpretation, such a reciter makes the Qur'an out to be a superfluous item which is ultimately ineffectual.

The third reciter is rarer than 'Red Sulphur'. The latter refers to a mythical substance which has been the quest of all alchemists, also called the Elixir of Life. It is said to have transmutative properties of changing base metal into gold, the same way the Qur'an transforms the lowly human into the pinnacle of all creation.

٢١ - حَدَّثَنَا أَحْمَدُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ الْأَمْدَاوِيُّ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ إِبْنِ أَبِي عُمَرَ عَنْ هِشَامِ بْنِ سَالِمٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: «الْقُرَّاءُ ثَلَاثَةٌ قَارِئٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ لِيَسْتَدِرَّ بِهِ الْمُلُوكَ وَ يَسْتَطِيلَ بِهِ عَلَى النَّاسِ فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ وَ قَارِئٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَحَفِظَ حُرُوفَهُ وَ ضَيَّعَ حُدُودَهُ فَذَاكَ مِنْ أَهْلِ النَّارِ وَ قَارِئٌ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَاسْتَتَرَ بِهِ تَحْتَ بَرْنُسِهِ فَهُوَ يَعْمَلُ بِمُحْكَمِهِ وَ يُؤْمِنُ بِمُتَشَابِهِ وَ يُقِيمُ فَرَائِضَهُ وَ يُجِلُّ حَلَالَهُ وَ يُحَرِّمُ حَرَامَهُ فَهَذَا مَنْ يُنْقِذُهُ اللَّهُ مِنْ مَضَلَّاتِ الْفِتَنِ وَ هُوَ مِنْ أَهْلِ الْجَنَّةِ وَ يَشْفَعُ فِيمَنْ شَاءَ»

(21) Imam al-Şādiq (a) said: 'The reciters [of the Qur'an] are three: a reciter who memorized the Qur'an so as to attract by it the rulers and gain ascendancy through it over the masses, such a person is from the inmates of the hellfire. A reciter who memorized the Qur'an so he preserves its letters but neglects its bounds, such a person is from the inmates of the hellfire. A reciter who memorized the Qur'an so he conceals himself with it under his hooded cloak [so as to remain anonymous]. He acts by its clear verses (*muḥkam*), believes in its ambiguous verses (*mutashābih*), upholds its obligations (*farā'id*), deems permissible its permissible (*halāl*), and forbids its impermissible (*harām*). Such a person is of those whom

*Allah saves from misguiding trials, and he is from the inmates of the garden, and he intercedes for whomsoever he wishes.*⁴⁴

Explanation

This is clearly a truncated version of hadith 20.

A further reason to explain why this third reciter of the Qur'an hides himself from the world (apart from sincerity) is that he does not have any need of begging from any slave who is himself dependent on Allah when he has the Qur'an given to him by Allah. In other words, the Qur'an is sufficient for him as it is the true riches.

44 *Al-Khiṣāl*, vol. 1, p. 170, hadith 165. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādith al-Mu'abara*, vol. 2, p. 381, hadith 4/1565).

CHAPTER 10 TRUE RICHES

٢٢ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ
سُلَيْمَانَ بْنِ رُشَيْدٍ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ، قَالَ: قَالَ لِي أَبُو
عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فَهُوَ غَنِيٌّ وَلَا فَقْرَ بَعْدَهُ...»

(22) *Mu'āwiya b. Ammār said: 'Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said to me: "The one who has memorized the Qur'an is rich and there is no poverty after it*
...»⁴⁵

Explanation

Refer to the statement attributed to the Commander of the Faithful (a):

وَاعْلَمُوا أَنَّهُ لَيْسَ عَلَى أَحَدٍ بَعْدَ الْقُرْآنِ مِنْ فَاقَةٍ، وَلَا لِأَحَدٍ قَبْلَ الْقُرْآنِ
مِنْ غِنًى

*'Know that no one remains needy after [acquiring] the Qur'an, and no one has any riches before [acquiring] the Qur'an.'*⁴⁶

45 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 610, hadith 8/3494. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Sulaymān b. Rushayd and his father both of whom are unknown. See also *Thawāb al-A'māl*, pp. 298-299, hadith 367 (with a different lower chain).

46 *Nahj al-Balāgha*, sermon 176.

In other words, no wealth can be compared to the Qur'an which is the greatest treasure. All other riches pale in comparison and become negligible in the face of the Qur'an, such that before gaining the Qur'an one will be considered impoverished even if he possesses all the other riches of the world, and after acquiring the Qur'an no riches remain to be had.

This is because the Qur'an contains within it a comprehensive package of universal truths and subtle realities, such that someone who studies it and imbues its guidance in full becomes needless of other than Allah in all his affairs.

That is why it is said:

وَمَنْ أُوتِيَ الْقُرْآنَ فَظَنَّ أَنَّ أَحَدًا مِّنَ النَّاسِ أُوتِيَ أَفْضَلَ بِمَا أُوتِيَ، فَقَدْ عَظَّمَ مَا حَقَّرَ اللَّهُ، وَحَقَّرَ مَا عَظَّمَ اللَّهُ

*'The one who has been given the Qur'an but thinks that another person has been given better than what he has been given, has considered great what Allah has deemed insignificant, and deemed insignificant what Allah has considered great.'*⁴⁷

And:

لَا يَنْبَغِي لِحَامِلِ الْقُرْآنِ أَنْ يَظُنَّ أَنَّ أَحَدًا أُعْطِيَ أَفْضَلَ بِمَا أُعْطِيَ لِأَنَّهُ لَوْ مَلَكَ الدُّنْيَا بِأَسْرِهَا لَكَانَ الْقُرْآنُ أَفْضَلَ بِمَا مَلَكَهُ

*'It is not appropriate for the bearer of the Qur'an to think that someone has been given something better than what he has been given. This is because even if he were to own the whole world with all that is contained in it, the Qur'an would still be better than what he owns.'*⁴⁸

47 Attributed to the Prophet (s) in a weak report (*al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 607-608, hadith 5/3491).

48 Sharīf al-Murtadā quoting Abī 'Ubayd al-Qāsim b. Sallām who attributes it to the Prophet (s) (*al-Murtadā's Amālī*, vol. 1, p. 31).

CHAPTER II

THE PARABLE OF THE FOUR FRUITS

٢٣ - أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْغَرِيُّ، عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ
عُبَيْسِ بْنِ هِشَامٍ، قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا صَالِحُ الْقَمَاطِ، عَنْ أَبَانَ بْنِ تَغْلِبٍ:
عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «النَّاسُ أَرْبَعَةٌ» فَقُلْتُ: جُعِلْتُ
فِدَاكَ، وَمَا هُمْ؟ فَقَالَ: «رَجُلٌ أُوتِيَ الْإِيمَانَ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ الْقُرْآنَ، وَرَجُلٌ
أُوتِيَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ الْإِيمَانَ، وَرَجُلٌ أُوتِيَ الْقُرْآنَ وَأُوتِيَ الْإِيمَانَ، وَرَجُلٌ لَمْ
يُؤْتَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَا الْإِيمَانَ». قَالَ: قُلْتُ: جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ، فَتَبَرَّ لِي حَالُهُمْ.
فَقَالَ: «أَمَّا الَّذِي أُوتِيَ الْإِيمَانَ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ الْقُرْآنَ، فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ التَّمْرَةِ،
طَعْمُهَا حُلْوٌ وَلَا رِيحَ لَهَا. وَأَمَّا الَّذِي أُوتِيَ الْقُرْآنَ وَلَمْ يُؤْتَ الْإِيمَانَ، فَمَثَلُهُ
كَمَثَلِ الْأَسِّ، رِيحُهَا طَيِّبٌ، وَطَعْمُهَا مُرٌّ. وَأَمَّا مَنْ أُوتِيَ الْقُرْآنَ وَالْإِيمَانَ،
فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْأَثْرِجَةِ، رِيحُهَا طَيِّبٌ، وَطَعْمُهَا طَيِّبٌ. وَأَمَّا الَّذِي لَمْ يُؤْتَ
الْإِيمَانَ وَلَا الْقُرْآنَ، فَمَثَلُهُ كَمَثَلِ الْحَنْظَلَةِ، طَعْمُهَا مُرٌّ، وَلَا رِيحَ لَهَا».

(23) Abān b. Taghlib said: 'Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: "People are four [kinds]." I said: "May I be made your ransom. Who are they?" He said: "A man who has been given faith but has not been given the Qur'an; a man who has been given the Qur'an but has not been given faith; a man who has been given both the Qur'an and faith; and a man who has neither been given the Qur'an nor faith." I said: "May I be made your ransom. Explain for me their states." He said: "As for the one who has been given faith but has not been given the Qur'an, his example is that of the date,

its taste is sweet but it has no fragrance. As for the one who has been given the Qur'an but has not been given faith, his example is that of the myrtle, its fragrance is good but its taste is bitter. As for the one who has been given both the Qur'an and faith, his example is that of the etrog, its fragrance is good and its taste is good. As for the one who has neither been given faith nor the Qur'an, his example is that of the colocynth, its taste is bitter and it has no fragrance.⁴⁹

Explanation

We differ in our capacity for memorizing and reciting the Qur'an. Some have been 'given' the Qur'an, that is to say, have been divinely facilitated to master it. There are many who have been given faith and who follow all the directives of the Qur'an but do not 'have' the Qur'an with them in this sense.

It is particularly apt that it is Abān b. Taghlib who transmits this report, for he himself was one of those given both faith and the Qur'an, being a well-known *qārī* who studied under both Imam al-Bāqir (a) and Imam al-Ṣādiq (a), as well as famous Kufan reciters such as al-A'mash and 'Aṣim (whose *qirā'a* (method of recitation) is the most popular one today). Abān even had his own individual *qirā'a* which he documents in his *Kitāb al-Qirā'āt* (now lost).

49 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 608-609, hadith 6/3492. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Ṣāliḥ al-Qammāt whose status is unknown. A similar wording is attributed to the Prophet (s) in a number of canonical collections of Sunni hadith, for instance, *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadith 5020.

CHAPTER 12

REWARD OF RECITING THE QUR'AN

٢٤ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَسَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ؛ وَعَلِيُّ
 بْنِ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ جَمِيعًا، عَنْ ابْنِ مَجْبُوبٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ،
 عَنْ مُعَاذِ بْنِ مُسْلِمٍ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ: عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ
 السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ قَائِمًا فِي صَلَاتِهِ، كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِكُلِّ
 حَرْفٍ مِائَةَ حَسَنَةٍ؛ وَمَنْ قَرَأَهُ فِي صَلَاتِهِ جَالِسًا، كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِكُلِّ
 حَرْفٍ خَمْسِينَ حَسَنَةً؛ وَمَنْ قَرَأَهُ فِي غَيْرِ صَلَاتِهِ، كَتَبَ اللَّهُ لَهُ بِكُلِّ
 حَرْفٍ عَشْرَ حَسَنَاتٍ»

(24) Imam al-Bāqir (a) said: 'Whoever recites the Qur'an whilst standing in his prayer, Allah writes for him for every letter a hundred good deeds. Whoever recites it whilst sitting in his prayer, Allah writes for him for every letter fifty good deeds. Whoever recites it in other than prayer, Allah writes for him for every letter ten good deeds.'⁵⁰

50 Al-Kāfī, vol. 4, pp. 620-621, hadith 1/3512. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter 'Abdallāh b. Sulaymān whose status is unknown. I have included it because it is partially corroborated by the subsequent report.

٢٥ - ابْنُ مُحْبُوبٍ، عَنْ جَمِيلِ بْنِ صَالِحٍ، عَنِ الْفَضْلِ بْنِ يَسَارٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «مَا يَمْنَعُ التَّاجِرَ مِنْكُمْ الْمَشْغُولَ فِي سُوقِهِ إِذَا رَجَعَ إِلَى مَنْزِلِهِ أَنْ لَا يَتَامَ حَتَّى يَقْرَأَ سُورَةً مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ، فَتُكْتَبَ لَهُ مَكَانَ كُلِّ آيَةٍ يَقْرُؤُهَا عَشْرُ حَسَنَاتٍ، وَيُمْحَى عَنْهُ عَشْرُ سَيِّئَاتٍ؟»

(25) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'What prevents a merchant among you who is busy in his market-place to not sleep when he returns back home until he recites a chapter from the Qur'an? Then it will be written for him in place of every verse that he recites ten good deeds and will be effaced for him ten evil deeds.'⁵¹

Explanation

The merchant will get ten because he is reciting outside of prayer (there is more reward for reciting it while in prayer as hadith 24 states).

But does one get ten for every 'letter' (as in hadith 24) or for every 'verse' (as in hadith 25)?

I believe that 'letter' should be given preference over 'verse' since other reports make it explicit that the reward of ten good deeds is for every letter.

Consider the weak report of Muḥammad b. Bashīr which quotes Imam al-Sajjād (a) as saying:

لَا أَقُولُ بِكُلِّ آيَةٍ، وَلَكِنْ بِكُلِّ حَرْفٍ: بَاءٌ، أَوْ تَاءٌ، أَوْ شِبْهَهُمَا

*'I do not say for every verse, rather, for every letter: bā' or tā' or suchlike.'*⁵²

51 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 621, hadith 2/3513. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muḥam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 2, p. 377, hadith 3/1553). Kulaynī reports from Ibn Maḥbūb via the three chains found in the previous report. These are: (a) A number of our companions -> Aḥmad b. Muḥammad; (b) A number of our companions -> Sahl b. Ziyād; and (c) 'Alī b. Ibrāhīm -> his father.

52 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 624-625, hadith 6/3517.

The matter is settled decisively when we consider what has been attributed to the Prophet (s) in Sunni sources:

مَنْ قَرَأَ حَرْفًا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُ بِهِ حَسَنَةٌ وَالْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا لَا
أَقُولُ: أَلَمْ حَرْفٌ. أَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ وَلَا مٌ حَرْفٌ وَمِيمٌ حَرْفٌ

*'Whoever recites a letter from the Book of Allah will have a good deed for it [written for him], and every good deed will be rewarded ten of its like.'*⁵³
*I do not say alif-lām-mīm is a letter, rather, alif is a letter, lām is a letter, and mīm is a letter!*⁵⁴

This means that you get thirty rewards just for *alif-lām-mīm*!

How expansive is the mercy of Allah!

٢٦ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ، عَنْ
إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ مِائَةَ
آيَةٍ يُصَلِّي بِهَا فِي لَيْلَةٍ، كَتَبَ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - لَهُ بِهَا قُتُوبَ لَيْلَةٍ؛ وَمَنْ
قَرَأَ مِائَتَيْ آيَةٍ (فِي لَيْلَةٍ) فِي غَيْرِ صَلَاةٍ (اللَّيْلِ)، لَمْ يُحَاجَّهُ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ؛ وَمَنْ قَرَأَ خَمْسَمِائَةَ آيَةٍ فِي يَوْمٍ وَ لَيْلَةٍ فِي صَلَاةِ النَّهَارِ وَاللَّيْلِ،
كَتَبَ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - لَهُ فِي اللُّوحِ الْمَحْفُوظِ قِنْطَارًا مِنْ حَسَنَاتٍ،
وَالْقِنْطَارُ أَلْفٌ وَمِائَتَانِ أَوْفَيَّةٌ، وَالْأَوْفَيَّةُ أَكْثَرُ مِنْ جَبَلٍ أَحَدٍ»

(26) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'The one who recites a hundred verses in his prayers at night, Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, records for him devotion of the whole night [as reward] for it. The one who recites two hundred verses [at night] outside of [his] prayers, the Qur'an will not dispute against him on the Day of Judgment. And the one who recites five hundred verses in his prayers by day and at night, Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, records for him in the Protected Tablet a qintār of good-

53 Allusion to Qur'an 6:160.

54 Sunan al-Tirmidhī, hadīth 2910.

The matter is settled decisively when we consider what has been attributed to the Prophet (s) in Sunni sources:

مَنْ قَرَأَ حَرْفًا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُ بِهِ حَسَنَةٌ وَالحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا لَا
أَقُولُ: أَلَمْ حَرْفٌ. أَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ وَلَا مٌ حَرْفٌ وَمِيمٌ حَرْفٌ

Whoever recites a letter from the Book of Allah will have a good deed for it [written for him], and every good deed will be rewarded ten of its like.⁵³ I do not say alif-lām-mīm is a letter, rather, alif is a letter, lām is a letter, and mīm is a letter!⁵⁴

This means that you get thirty rewards just for *alif-lām-mīm*!

How expansive is the mercy of Allah!

٢٦ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ، عَنْ
إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ مِائَةَ
آيَةٍ يُصَلِّي بِهَا فِي لَيْلَةٍ، كَتَبَ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - لَهُ بِهَا قُتُوبَ لَيْلَةٍ؛ وَمَنْ
قَرَأَ مِائَتَيْنِ آيَةٍ (فِي لَيْلَةٍ) فِي غَيْرِ صَلَاةٍ (اللَّيْلِ)، لَمْ يُحَاجَّهُ الْقُرْآنُ يَوْمَ
الْقِيَامَةِ؛ وَمَنْ قَرَأَ خَمْسِمِائَةَ آيَةٍ فِي يَوْمٍ وَ لَيْلَةٍ فِي صَلَاةِ النَّهَارِ وَاللَّيْلِ،
كَتَبَ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - لَهُ فِي اللُّوحِ الْمَحْفُوظِ قِنْطَارًا مِنْ حَسَنَاتٍ،
وَالْقِنْطَارُ أَلْفٌ وَمِائَتَانِ أَوْقِيَّةً، وَالْأَوْقِيَّةُ أَكْبَرُ مِنْ جَبَلٍ أَحَدٍ»

(26) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'The one who recites a hundred verses in his prayers at night, Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, records for him devotion of the whole night [as reward] for it. The one who recites two hundred verses [at night] outside of [his] prayers, the Qur'an will not dispute against him on the Day of Judgment. And the one who recites five hundred verses in his prayers by day and at night, Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, records for him in the Protected Tablet a qinṭār of good-

53 Allusion to Qur'an 6:160.

54 Sunan al-Tirmidhī, hadith 2910.

deeds, and a *qinṭār* is a thousand and two hundred *ūqiyya*, and a [single] *ūqiyya* is greater than *Uḥud*!⁵⁵

Explanation

The one who recites a hundred verses in his nightly prayers is considered to have worshipped Allah the whole night, and gets an equivalent reward for it, even if he goes to sleep.

The Qur'an will not dispute against someone who recites two hundred verses at night [outside his prayers] the way it will 'dispute' and provide eloquent testimony against those who abandon it.

An *ūqiyya* was a measure equal to the weight of forty *dirhams* (silver coins) but this heavenly *ūqiyya* is of a weight greater than Mount *Uḥud*, and the one who recites five hundred verses in his prayers throughout the day will get 1200 of these.

55 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 645, hadith 9/3553. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 2, p. 378, hadith 8/1557). Al-Ṣadūq reports it in his *Ma'ānī al-Akḥbār* (p. 248) and *Thawāb al-A'māl* (p. 296, hadith 363) but this is an incomplete variant with significant droppage compared to the report as found in *al-Kāfi*.

CHAPTER 13

THE HOUSES IN WHICH THE QUR'AN IS RECITED

٢٧ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ وَالْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ جَمِيعاً، عَنِ النَّضْرِ بْنِ سُوَيْدٍ، عَنْ يَحْيَى بْنِ عِمْرَانَ الْحَلَبِيِّ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الْأَعْلَى مَوْلَى آلِ سَامٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَام، قَالَ: «إِنَّ الْبَيْتَ إِذَا كَانَ فِيهِ الْمَرْءُ الْمُسْلِمُ يَتْلُو الْقُرْآنَ، يَتَرَاءَاهُ أَهْلُ السَّمَاءِ، كَمَا يَتَرَاءَى أَهْلُ الدُّنْيَا الْكَوْكَبَ الدَّرِّيَّ فِي السَّمَاءِ»

(27) *Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'The house in which a Muslim recites the Qur'an is seen by the inhabitants of heaven the way the inhabitants of Earth see a shining star in the sky.'*⁵⁶

56 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 619, hadith 2/3510. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter 'Abd al-A'lā the *maula* of 'Al Sām. If the latter is identical to 'Abd al-A'lā b. A'yan, as is very likely, then there is an argument in favor of his strengthening, for he is included in a group that is highly praised by al-Mufid in his epistle *Jawābāt Ahl al-Mawṣil fī al-'Adad wa al-Ru'ya*. But Ayatollah Muḥsinī does not consider this evidence to be decisive and gives a number of *qarā'in* (indicators) supporting his stance (see: *Buḥārāh fī 'Ilm al-Rijāl*, pp. 150-151, footnote 1). He ends up making *tawāqquf* (suspending judgment) over him and treating his reports with *ihṭiyāt* (caution).

٢٨ - أَبِي رِهَ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ اللَّهِ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ الْجَمِيرِيُّ عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ جَبَلٍ عَنْ فَضِيلٍ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: «إِنَّ الْبُيُوتَ الَّتِي يُصَلَّى فِيهَا بِاللَّيْلِ تَلَاوَةَ الْقُرْآنِ تُضِيءُ لِأَهْلِ السَّمَاءِ كَمَا تُضِيءُ نَجُومُ السَّمَاءِ لِأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ»

(28) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'The houses in which prayers are performed at night and the Qur'an is recited shine bright to the inhabitants of heaven the way the stars of the sky shine bright to the inhabitants of Earth.'⁵⁷

٢٩ - حَدَّثَنِي جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ عَنْ أَبِي فَضَالٍ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي عَبْدُ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنُ أَبِي نُجْرَانَ، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو هَارُونَ، قَالَ: كُنْتُ سَاكِنًا دَارَ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ، فَلَمَّا عَلِمَ انْقِطَاعِي إِلَى أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ وَ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ أَخْرَجَنِي مِنْ دَارِهِ، قَالَ: فَمَرَّ بِي أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ لِي: «يَا أَبَا هَارُونَ بَلَّغْنِي أَنَّ هَذَا أَخْرَجَكَ مِنْ دَارِهِ؟» قَالَ: قُلْتُ: تَعَمَّ جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ، قَالَ: «بَلَّغْنِي أَنَّكَ كُنْتَ تُكثِّرُ فِيهَا تِلَاوَةَ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى، وَ الدَّارُ إِذَا تُلِّيَ فِيهَا كِتَابُ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى كَانَ لَهَا نُورٌ سَاطِعٌ فِي السَّمَاءِ تُعْرِفُ مِنْ بَيْنِ الدُّورِ»

(29) Abū Hārūn said: 'I used to live in the house of al-Hasan b. al-Husayn,⁵⁸ so when he came to know of my adherence to Imam al-Bāqir (a) and Imam al-Sādiq (a) he kicked me out of his house. Then Imam al-Sādiq (a) passed by me [in the street] and said to me: "O Abā Hārūn, I have been informed that this one has banished you from his house?" I said: "Yes, may I be made your ransom." He said: "I have been informed that you used to recite the Book of Allah, the Exalted, a lot while you were in that house, and a house in which the Book of Allah, the Exalted,

57 Thawāb al-A'māl, p. 151, hadith 176. The report has a **reliable** chain.

58 A man from the progeny of Imam al-Hasan (a).

is recited emits a bright light reaching heaven causing it [i.e. the house] to be identifiable from among the houses.³³⁵⁹

٣٠ - مُحَمَّدٌ، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ، وَعِدَّةٍ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ جَمِيعاً، عَنْ جَعْفَرِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ ابْنِ الْقَدَاحِ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: الْبَيْتُ الَّذِي يُقْرَأُ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ وَيُذَكَّرُ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - فِيهِ تَكْتَرُ بَرَكَتُهُ، وَتَحْضُرُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَتَهْجُرُهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ، وَيُضِيءُ لِأَهْلِ السَّمَاءِ، كَمَا تُضِيءُ الْكَوَاكِبُ لِأَهْلِ الْأَرْضِ؛ وَإِنَّ الْبَيْتَ الَّذِي لَا يُقْرَأُ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ وَلَا يُذَكَّرُ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - فِيهِ تَقَلُّ بَرَكَتُهُ، وَتَهْجُرُهُ الْمَلَائِكَةُ، وَتَحْضُرُهُ الشَّيَاطِينُ»

(30) Imam al-Šādiq (a) said: 'The Commander of the Faithful (a) said: "The house in which the Qur'an is recited and in which Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, is remembered, its blessings increase, angels visit it, devils abandon it, and it shines bright to the inhabitants of heaven the way the stars shine bright to the inhabitants of Earth. The house in which the Qur'an is not recited and in which Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, is not remembered, its blessings decrease, angels abandon it, and devils visit it."³³⁶⁰

59 *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, p. 192, hadith 395. Ja'far b. Muḥammad in the chain is likely a corruption of Muḥammad b. Mas'ūd (al-'Ayyāshī) who is the intermediary between Kashshī and 'Alī b. al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī b. Faḍlāl in numerous chains in the book (see: *Qāmūs al-Rijāl*, vol. 11, p. 545). If that is indeed the case then all the narrators in the chain would be reliable with the exception of Abū Hārūn, the narrator of the incident, whose status is unknown.

60 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 619-620, hadith 3/3511. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Ja'far b. Muḥammad b. 'Ubaydallāh whose status is unknown.

CHAPTER 14

THE MINIMUM TO BE RECITED EVERY DAY

٣١ - عَنْ عَلِيٍّ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ حُمَادٍ، عَنْ حَرِيرٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ
السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «الْقُرْآنُ عَهْدُ اللَّهِ إِلَى خَلْقِهِ، فَقَدْ يَنْبَغِي لِلْمَرْءِ الْمُسْلِمِ
أَنْ يَنْظُرَ فِي عَهْدِهِ، وَأَنْ يَقْرَأَ مِنْهُ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ خَمْسِينَ آيَةً»

(31) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'The Qur'an is the covenant of Allah with His creatures, it is therefore incumbent on a Muslim to look into His covenant and that he recite fifty verses from it every day.'⁶¹

Explanation

'Covenant' means the agreement or contract with Allah that we Muslims have agreed to take upon ourselves to fulfill. It is necessary therefore to know what exactly we are required to do by studying it carefully.

61 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 617-618, hadith 1/3507. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 2, p. 376, hadith 1/1551).

٣٢ - وَ عَنْهُ عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ حُكَيْمٍ عَنْ مُعَمَّرِ بْنِ خَلَادٍ عَنِ الرِّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: «يَنْبَغِي لِلرَّجُلِ إِذَا أَصْبَحَ أَنْ يَقْرَأَ بَعْدَ التَّعْقِيبِ خَمْسِينَ آيَةً»

(32) Mu'ammār b. Khallād said: 'I heard him [Imam al-Riḍā (a)] saying: "It is incumbent on a man when he wakes up [in the morning] to recite fifty verses after fajr prayer supplications."⁶²

62 Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām, vol. 2, p. 148, hadith 305/537. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara, vol. 2, p. 376-377, hadith 2/1552).

CHAPTER 15

MERIT OF SPECIFIC CHAPTERS AND VERSES

Sūrat al-Ḥamd

٣٣ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «لَوْ قُرِئَتِ الْحَمْدُ عَلَى مَيِّتٍ سَبْعِينَ مَرَّةً، ثُمَّ رُدَّتْ فِيهِ الرُّوحُ، مَا كَانَ ذَلِكَ عَجَبًا»

(33) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'If al-Ḥamd were to be recited seventy times over a dead body and the soul returns into it, that would not be surprising!'

Explanation

The report is not descriptive in that it does not inform us that this is what happens when al-Ḥamd is recited, nor is it prescriptive in that it does not encourage us to do this because this outcome will definitely occur; rather, the aim is to show the great status of al-Ḥamd, such that if this were to happen then it would not be a cause for surprise.

63 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, pp. 648-649, hadith 16/3560. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣṣaḥḥ al-Aḥādīth al-Muṣṣabaha*, vol. 2, p. 379, hadith 9/1558).

Sūrat al-Hamd, Āyat al-Kursī, Āyat al-Shahāda, and Āyat al-Mulk

٣٤ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ زَيْدٍ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ الْمِثْمِيِّ، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «لَمَّا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - هَذِهِ الْآيَاتِ أَنْ يَنْهَيطُنَّ إِلَى الْأَرْضِ، تَعَلَّقْنَ بِالْعَرْشِ، وَقُلْنَ: أَيُّ رَبِّ، إِلَى أَيْنَ تَنْهَيطُنَا؟ إِلَى أَهْلِ الْخَطَايَا وَالذُّنُوبِ؟ فَأَوْحَى اللَّهُ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - إِلَيْهِنَّ: أَنْ انْهَيطُنَّ، فَوَعِزَّتِي وَجَلَالِي، لَا يَتَلَوْنَ أَحَدٌ مِنْ آلِ مُحَمَّدٍ وَشِيعَتِهِمْ فِي دُبُرِ مَا افْتَرَضْتُ عَلَيْهِ مِنَ الْمَكْتُوبَةِ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ، إِلَّا نَظَرْتُ إِلَيْهِ بِعَيْنِي الْمَكْنُونَةِ فِي كُلِّ يَوْمٍ سَبْعِينَ نَظْرَةً، أَقْضِي لَهُ فِي كُلِّ نَظْرَةٍ سَبْعِينَ حَاجَةً، وَقَبْلَتُهُ عَلَى مَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْمَعَاصِي، وَهِيَ: أُمُّ الْكِتَابِ، وَ«شَهِدَ اللَّهُ أَنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ وَالْمَلَائِكَةُ وَأُولُوا الْعِلْمِ»، وَآيَةُ الْكُرْسِيِّ، وَآيَةُ الْمُلْكِ»

(34) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'When Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, ordered these verses to go down to the Earth they attached themselves to the Throne and said: "O Lord - where are You sending us down to? To the errant and the sinful?!" So Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, revealed to them: "Go down - for by My might and majesty - no one from the family of Muhammad and their Shia will recite you after [completing] what I have obligated on him of the five daily prayers, except that I will glance at him with My hidden eye, seventy glances a day, fulfilling for him in each glance seventy wishes, and I accept him despite what he has of sins."

They [the verses] are: Umm al-Kitāb (The Mother of the Book),⁶⁴ "Allah witnesses that there is no God except Himself, [so do] the angels, and the possessors of knowledge ...",⁶⁵ Āyat al-Kursī,⁶⁶ and Āyat al-Mulk.^{67, 68}

64 Qur'an 1:1-7.

65 Qur'an 3:18.

66 Qur'an 2:255.

67 Qur'an 3:26.

68 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 641-642, hadith 2/3546. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muḥam al-Aḥādīth al-Muḥabara*, vol. 2, p. 377, hadith 5/1554).

Explanation

‘Allāma Majlisī comments that the phrase ‘hidden eye’ refers to special divine attention.

Further, the phrase ‘attached themselves to the Throne’ is ‘Either a metaphor for the sanctity [of the verses] in their being far-removed from the stain of sins, or perhaps what is intended is the angels who are charged over the verses [who attached themselves], or it may be the living spirit of letters [of these verses], as a number of scholars have concluded. The truth is that these matters are among the secrets of their knowledge and the mysteries of their wisdom. And we are obligated to believe in them in general and not to investigate its details – and Allah knows best’.⁶⁹

I say: this last possibility is not only supported by a plain sense reading of the text but also parallels other reports we have seen where the Qur’an, its chapters, and its verses embody physical form.

Sūrat al-Kahf

٣٥ - عَنْهُ (عَلِيِّ بْنِ مَهْزِيَّارٍ) عَنْ أَيُّوبَ بْنِ نُوحٍ عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَبِي حَمْزَةَ قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ سُورَةَ الْكَافِرِ فِي كُلِّ لَيْلَةٍ جُمُعَةٍ كَانَتْ كَفَّارَةً لَهُ لِمَا بَيْنَ الْجُمُعَةِ إِلَى الْجُمُعَةِ»

(35) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: ‘Whoever recites Sūrat al-Kahf every Friday eve [i.e. Thursday night] it becomes an expiation for him for what is between one Friday to another Friday [of sins].’⁷⁰

69 Mirāt al-Uqūl, vol. 12, pp. 507-508.

70 Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām, vol. 3, p. 10, hadith 26; al-Kāfi, vol. 6, p. 487, hadith 7/4595. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṣabara, vol. 2, p. 379, hadith 11/1560).

Sūrat al-Ṣāffāt

٣٦ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ مُوسَى بْنِ الْحَسَنِ، عَنْ سُلَيْمَانَ الْجَعْفَرِيِّ، قَالَ: رَأَيْتُ أَبَا الْحَسَنِ (الأول عليه السلام) يَقُولُ لِابْنِهِ الْقَاسِمِ: «قُمْ يَا بُنَيَّ، فَاقْرَأْ عِنْدَ رَأْسِ أَخِيكَ «وَالصَّافَّاتِ صَفًّا» حَتَّى تَسْتَمِّهَا» فَقَرَأَ، فَلَمَّا بَلَغَ «أَهُمْ أَشَدُّ خَلْقًا أَمْ مَنْ خَلَقْنَا» فَضَى الْفَتَى، فَلَمَّا سَجَى وَخَرَجُوا، أَقْبَلَ عَلَيْهِ يَغُوثُ بْنُ جَعْفَرٍ، فَقَالَ لَهُ: «كُنَّا تَعْبُدُ الْمَيِّتَ إِذَا نُزِلَ بِهِ الْمَوْتُ، يَقْرَأُ عِنْدَهُ «يس وَالْقُرْآنِ الْحَكِيمِ» فَصِرْتَ تَأْمُرُنَا بِ «الصَّافَّاتِ»؟» فَقَالَ: «يَا بُنَيَّ لَمْ تُقْرَأْ عِنْدَ مَكْرُوبٍ مِنْ مَوْتٍ قَطُّ إِلَّا عَجَّلَ اللَّهُ رَاحَتَهُ»

(36) Sulaymān al-Jaʿfarī said: 'I saw Imam al-Kāzīm (a) saying to his son, al-Qāsim: "Get up my son and recite by the head of your brother; wa al-ṣāffātī ṣaffā [chapter 37] until you complete it." So he began reciting and when he reached "Are they a stronger creation or those whom We have created?" [verse 11], the youth passed away. When he [i.e. the deceased son] had been covered with a sheet and they [i.e. those in the room] came out, Ya'qūb b. Ja'far approached him [i.e. the Imam] and said to him: "We used to know that yā sīn wa al-qur'ān al-ḥakīm [chapter 36] is recited near a dying person when he is about to die, but you have instructed us to recite al-Ṣāffāt?" He [the Imam] said: "O my son, it [i.e. al-Ṣāffāt] is not recited near one suffering the pangs of death except that Allah hastens for him relief."⁷¹

Sūrat al-Qadr

٣٧ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ أَحْمَدَ، قَالَ: كُنْتُ بِقَيْدٍ، فَخَسَيْتُ مَعَ عَلِيِّ بْنِ بِلَالٍ إِلَى قَبْرِ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ بَرِيعٍ، فَقَالَ لِي عَلِيُّ بْنُ بِلَالٍ: قَالَ لِي صَاحِبُ هَذَا الْقَبْرِ عَنِ الرِّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: قَالَ: «مَنْ

71 Al-Kāfi, vol. 5, pp. 335-336, hadith 5/4303. The report has a reliable chain.

أَتَى قَبْرَ أَخِيهِ، ثُمَّ وَضَعَ يَدَهُ عَلَى الْقَبْرِ، وَقَرَأَ «إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ»
سَبْعَ مَرَّاتٍ، أَمِنْ يَوْمَ الْفَرَجِ الْأَكْبَرِ، أَوْ يَوْمَ الْفَرَجِ»

(37) *Muhammad b. Ahmad [b. Yahyā] said: 'I was in Fayḍ⁷² so I walked with 'Alī b. Bilāl to the grave of Muhammad b. Ismā'īl b. Bazī'. 'Alī b. Bilāl said to me: "The occupant of this grave [i.e. Muhammad b. Ismā'īl b. Bazī'] narrated to me on the authority of al-Riḍa (a) that he [i.e. the Imam] said: 'Whoever comes to the grave of his [believing] brother, places his hand upon the grave, and recites innā anzalnāhu fī laylat al-qadr [chapter 97] seven times, will be secure on the Day of the Great Terror.'"*⁷³

Sūrat al-Tawhīd and Sūrat al-Kāfirūn

٣٨ - أَبُو عَلِيٍّ الْأَشْعَرِيُّ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الْجَبَّارِ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ بْنِ
يَحْيَى، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ:
«كَانَ أَبِي - صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ - يَقُولُ: «قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ» ثَلَاثُ
الْقُرْآنِ، وَ«قُلْ يَا أَيُّهَا الْكَافِرُونَ» رُبْعُ الْقُرْآنِ»

(38) *Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'My father (a) used to say: "Qul huwa allāhu aḥad [chapter 112] is a third of the Qur'an, and, qul yā ayyuhā al-kāfirūn [chapter 109] is a fourth of the Qur'an.'"*⁷⁴

Explanation

The reward of reciting Sūrat al-Tawhīd is equivalent to the reward of reciting a third of the Qur'an, and the reward of

72 A locality half-way on the road to Mecca from Kufa.

73 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 5, p. 568, hadith 9/4684. The report has a **reliable** chain. See also *Rijāl al-Kashshī*, p. 466, hadith 1066 for an important variant of the same report.

74 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 644, hadith 7/3551. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara*, vol. 2, p. 378, hadith 6/1555).

reciting Sūrat al-Kāfirūn is equivalent to the reward of reciting a quarter of the Qur'an.

Sūrat al-Tawhīd

٣٩ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدَ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ وَالْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ جَمِيعاً، عَنِ النَّضْرِ بْنِ سُوَيْدٍ، عَنْ يَحْيَى الْحَلَبِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي أُسَامَةَ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ: «مَنْ قَرَأَ «قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ» مِائَةً مَرَّةٍ حِينَ يَأْخُذُ مَضْجَعَهُ، غُفِرَ لَهُ مَا عَمِلَ قَبْلَ ذَلِكَ خَمْسِينَ عَاماً» وَقَالَ يَحْيَى: فَسَأَلْتُ سَمَاعَةَ عَنْ ذَلِكَ، فَقَالَ: حَدَّثَنِي أَبُو بَصِيرٍ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ يَقُولُ ذَلِكَ، وَقَالَ: «يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ، أَمَا إِنَّكَ إِنْ جَرَّبْتَهُ وَجَدْتَهُ سَدِيداً»

(39) Yahyā al-Halabī narrates from Abī Usāma who said: 'I heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) saying: "Whoever recites qul huwa allāhu aḥad [chapter 112] a hundred times when he lies down on his bed [before sleeping] will be forgiven what he has committed [of sins] going back fifty years.'"

Yahyā said: 'I asked Samā'a about that so he [Samā'a] said: "Abū Baṣīr narrated [the same] to me and said: 'I heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) saying that, and he [i.e. the Imam] added: "O Abā Muḥammad [i.e. Abū Baṣīr], if you were to try it you will find it to be true!"'"

Explanation

How will the one who 'tries' to do this 'find it to be true'? After all, one cannot 'tell' if his past sins have been forgiven or not, let alone those going back fifty years!

75 Al-Kāfī, vol. 4, p. 458, hadith 15/3331. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'abara, vol. 2, p. 378, hadith 7/1556). See also al-Kāfī, vol. 4, pp. 642-643, hadith 4/3548 for a variant of the same report with slight changes, such as, the Imam attributing the statement to the Prophet (s). All the narrators in the chain of this last report are reliable except 'Abdallāh b. Talḥa whose status is unknown.

Some scholars say that he will find this realized in the hereafter. A more probable interpretation is given by Fayḍ al-Kāshānī who said that such a person will be able to notice in this world, and that is because he will discover the signs of being forgiven in his heart, through the light that will shine therein, and through the facilitation, guidance, and ease that will follow and which he will be able to observe.⁷⁶

٤٠ - أَبِي رَجْمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى الْعَطَّارُ عَنِ الْعُمَرَكِيِّ
الْحُرَّاسَانِيِّ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ عَنْ أَخِيهِ مُوسَى بْنِ جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِمَا
السَّلَامُ قَالَ: قَالَ عَلِيُّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَنْ صَلَّى صَلَاةَ الْفَجْرِ ثُمَّ قَرَأَ قُلْ
هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ إِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ مَرَّةً لَمْ يَتَّبِعْهُ فِي ذَلِكَ الْيَوْمِ ذَنْبٌ وَإِنْ رَغِمَ
أَنْفُ الشَّيْطَانِ

(40) Imam 'Alī (a) said: 'Whoever prays the fajr prayer and then recites *qul huwa allāhu aḥad* [chapter 112] eleven times, no sin will follow this on that day, though Satan's nose be soiled [in the dust].'⁷⁷

Explanation

'Nose be soiled' is a metaphor for humiliation. The Devil will end up humiliated because he will try very hard to make this person commit a sin, but it will be futile and he will end up disgraced despite his wishes.

76 *Al-Wāfī*, vol. 9, p. 1584, hadith 17/8790.

77 *Thawāb al-A'māl*, pp. 157-158, hadith 183. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muḥam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara*, vol. 2, p. 379, hadith 12/1561). Note that al-'Amrakī is the one who transmits the *Masā'il* of 'Alī b. Ja'far al-'Urayḍī consisting of the questions the latter asked his brother Mūsā (a).

CHAPTER 16

PACE OF RECITATION

٤١ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مَعْبُدٍ، عَنْ وَاصِلِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ سِنَانٍ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنْ قَوْلِ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: «وَرَتِّلِ الْقُرْآنَ تَرْتِيلًا». قَالَ: «قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ صَلَوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ: بَيِّنُهُ تَبَيَّنًا، وَلَا تَهْدُهُ هَذَا الشَّعْرُ، وَ لَا تَتَنَثَّرُهُ تَنَثَّرَ الرَّمْلُ، وَلَكِنْ أَفْرِغُوا قُلُوبَكُمْ الْقَاسِيَةَ، وَلَا يَكُنْ هُمْ أَحَدِكُمْ آخِرَ السُّورَةِ»

(41) Abdallāh b. Sinān said: 'I asked Imam al-Sādiq (a) about the words of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic: "And recite the Qur'an with a measured recitation" [73:4]. He said: "The Commander of the Faithful (a) said [it means]: 'Pronounce it distinctly. Do not chant it rapidly like the chanting of poetry, nor scatter it about like the scattering of sand [when wind blows], rather, terrify [with it] your hardened hearts. The desire of one of you should not be [to just reach] the end of the sūra.'"⁷⁸

Explanation

Reciters of poetry were praised for their speed in reciting long compositions without pause, but the Qur'an is recited for reflection upon it, not to cause marvel or demonstrate talent.

78 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pp. 628-629, hadith 1/3524. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except 'Alī b. Ma'bad and Wāṣil b. Sulaymān who are both unknown.

'Scatter it about like the scattering of sand' is figurative language for reciters who spew out their words which fall one over the other, miss out letters, eat up sounds, all in their hurry to complete, the same way sand particles left to the wind are driven haphazardly, without control, thereby making a chaotic sound.

٤٢ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عِيسَى،
عَنْ سَمَاعَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «يَتَنَغَّى لِمَنْ يَقْرَأَ
الْقُرْآنَ إِذَا مَرَّ بِآيَةٍ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ فِيهَا مَسْأَلَةٌ أَوْ تَخْوِيفٌ أَنْ يَسْأَلَ اللَّهَ عِنْدَ
ذَلِكَ خَيْرَ مَا يَرْجُو، وَيَسْأَلُهُ الْعَافِيَةَ مِنَ النَّارِ وَمِنَ الْعَذَابِ»

(42) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'It is incumbent on the person who is reciting the Qur'an, when he passes by a verse of the Qur'an in which there is a request or a threat, that he ask Allah at that juncture the best of what he hopes for, and asks Him protection from hellfire and punishment.'⁷⁹

Explanation

When a reciter comes across a verse or passage which mentions the promise of Allah to the believers and a description of the bounties found in paradise, he should pause and sincerely beseech Allah to be of those who will be rewarded with it. Likewise, when a reciter comes across verse or passage which mentions the threat of Allah against the disbelievers and a description of the torments found in hellfire, he should pause and sincerely beseech Allah to be of those who will be saved from it.

This is only possible if one engages with the meaning of the Qur'an on a deeper level, visualizing what he recites as if he can already see it in front of him.

79 Al-Kāfi, vol. 6, p. 114, hadith 1/4927. The report has a **reliable** chain.

٤٣ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ زَيْادٍ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْأَسَدِيِّ (الكندي)، عَنْ
أَحْمَدَ بْنِ الْحَسَنِ الْمِثْمِيِّ، عَنْ أَبِي إِسْحَاقَ بْنِ عُمَانَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْفَضِيلِ،
قَالَ: قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «يُكْرَهُ أَنْ يُقْرَأَ» «قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ»
بِنَفْسٍ وَاحِدٍ»

(43) Imam al-Šādiq (a) said: 'It is disliked that *qul huwa allāhu aḥad* [chapter 112] be recited in a single breath.'⁸⁰

Explanation

Even in a short chapter such as al-Tawḥīd which has four verses, one must go slow, pause between verses, and draw breath instead of stringing the verses together.

80 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 633-634, hadith 12/3535. See also *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 151, hadith 11/4989 for a variant of the same report wherein Kulaynī narrates from a different teacher of his (i.e. al-ʿAṭṭār) without giving a chain to al-Šādiq (a). Muḥammad b. al-Fuḍayl is possibly al-Rizqī (see: *al-khiṣāl*, vol. 2, p. 396, hadith 51; vol. 2, p. 445, hadith 6). In some manuscripts, the name of the primary transmitter has been recorded as Muḥammad b. al-Faḍl, in which case he is most probably al-Hāshimī (see: *al-Kāfi*, vol. 6, p. 582, hadith 11/5629). Whichever it may be, both are unknown in status.

CHAPTER 17

TONE OF RECITATION

٤٤ - سَهْلٌ، عَنِ الْحَجَّالِ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ عُقْبَةَ، عَنْ رَجُلٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «كَانَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ الْحُسَيْنِ - صَلَّوَاتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ - أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ صَوْتًا بِالْقُرْآنِ، وَكَانَ السَّقَاوُونَ يَمْرُونَ، فَيَقِفُونَ بِنَائِهِ يَسْمَعُونَ قِرَاءَتَهُ، وَكَانَ أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ صَوْتًا»

(44) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'Alī b. al-Husayn (a) was the best of the people as far as voice in Qur'an. The water-carriers would pass by so they would stand by his door to listen to his recitation. Abū Ja'far (a) was [also] the best of the people as far as voice.'⁸¹

٤٥ - و من ذلك ما استطرفناه من كتاب نواذر المصنف (المصنفين) تصنيف محمد بن علي بن محبوب الأشعري الجوهري القمي: الْعَبَّاسُ عَنْ حَمَّادِ بْنِ عَيْسَى عَنْ مُعَاوِيَةَ بْنِ عَمَّارٍ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ الرَّجُلُ لَا يَرَى أَنَّهُ صَنَعَ شَيْئًا فِي الدُّعَاءِ وَ فِي الْقِرَاءَةِ حَتَّى يَرْفَعَ صَوْتَهُ فَقَالَ «لَا بَأْسَ إِنَّ عَلِيَّ بْنَ الْحُسَيْنِ عَلَيْهِمَا السَّلَامُ كَانَ

81 Al-Kāfī, vol. 4, p. 633, hadith 11/3534. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Sahl b. Ziyād al-Ādamī whose status is controversial. There is also an unknown intermediary between 'Alī b. 'Uqba and the Imam.

أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ صَوْتًا بِالْقُرْآنِ وَ كَانَ يَرْفَعُ صَوْتَهُ حَتَّى يُسْمِعَهُ أَهْلَ الدَّارِ
وَ إِنَّ أَبَا جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ كَانَ أَحْسَنَ النَّاسِ صَوْتًا بِالْقُرْآنِ وَ كَانَ
إِذَا قَامَ مِنَ اللَّيْلِ وَ قَرَأَ رَفَعَ صَوْتَهُ فَيَمُرُّ بِهِ مَارُّ الطَّرِيقِ مِنَ السَّفَائِنِ وَ
غَيْرِهِمْ فَيَقُومُونَ فَيَسْتَمِعُونَ إِلَى قِرَاءَتِهِ»

(45) Mu'āwiya b. Anmār said: 'I said to Imam al-Šādiq (a): "A man does not consider himself to have accomplished anything in supplication and in recitation [of the Qur'an] unless he raises his voice?" He said: "There is no problem [in that]. 'Alī b. al-Husayn (a) was the best of the people as far as voice in Qur'an, and he used to raise his voice so as to make the inhabitants of the house hear him. And Abā Ja'far (a) was the best of the people as far as voice in Qur'an, and he used to raise his voice when he would stand by night [for prayer] and recite [the Qur'an], so passers-by, such as water-carriers and the like, would halt to listen to his recitation."⁸²

Explanation

This is a more complete version of hadith number 44.

It is recommended to recite the Qur'an in a beautiful voice. How beautiful must the recitation of the Imam have been to cause even those toiling in search of their daily bread to stop in their tracks to hear the Qur'an being recited!

There was dispute about how loud one should be when reciting the Qur'an in private worship. Some early proto-Sunni authorities discouraged raising the voice when reciting the Qur'an fearing that it could turn into a performance. But the

82 This report is taken from the last section of Ibn Idrīs al-Hillī's magnum opus *al-Sarā'ir*, which he dedicates for extracting material (*mustaṭrafāt*) from earlier hadith works available to him, in this instance the book *Nawādir al-Muṣannifin* of Muḥammad b. 'Alī b. Maḥbūb (described as the foremost scholarly authority of the Qummīs in his time). While Ibn Idrīs's chain to Muḥammad is not given, the chain within the book itself is reliable. See *Mawṣū'at Ibn Idrīs al-Hillī*, vol. 14, p. 189, hadith 17.

Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt see no problem in raising the voice as it has a greater impact on oneself and on the listeners so long as one's intention is not to show off. Exactly how loud one should be is answered in the next report.

٤٦ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ ابْنِ مُحْبُوبٍ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي حَمْزَةَ، عَنْ أَبِي بَصِيرٍ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: إِذَا قَرَأْتُ الْقُرْآنَ فَرَفَعْتُ بِهِ صَوْتِي، جَاءَنِي الشَّيْطَانُ، فَقَالَ: إِنَّمَا تُرَائِي بِحَذَا أَهْلَكَ وَالنَّاسُ؟ قَالَ: «يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ، اقْرَأْ قِرَاءَةً مَا بَيْنَ الْقِرَاءَتَيْنِ: تُسْمِعُ أَهْلَكَ، وَرُجِعَ بِالْقُرْآنِ صَوْتُكَ؛ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ - عَزَّ وَجَلَّ - يُحِبُّ الصَّوْتَ الْحَسَنَ يُرْجِعُ فِيهِ (به) تَرْجِيعًا»

(46) *Abū Baṣīr said: 'I said to Imam al-Bāqir (a): "When I recite the Qur'an and raise my voice, Satan comes to me and says: 'You are showing off with this for your family and the people!'" He [the Imam] said: "O Abā Muḥammad, recite with a recitation that is between the two extremes [while] making your family hear, and quaver your voice with the Qur'an, for Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, loves a good voice which quavers."*⁸³

Explanation

Abū Baṣīr could tell that this insinuation came from Satan because it is he who weakens someone's resolve to do good by planting seeds of self-doubt. The best approach in response to this is to follow the Imam's suggestion and ignore the insinuation completely.

The Imam instructs Abū Baṣīr to take the middle course between the two extremes of 'whispering to oneself' and

83 *Al-Hāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 634-634, hadith 13/3536. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except 'Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'īnī whose status is controversial. Many scholars accept his reports from Abī Baṣīr Yaḥyā which are supposed to have been narrated from him before his later deviation.

‘shouting out loud’, which practically means raising the voice to a level that the inhabitants of the house can hear you. Thus, we are told that the inhabitants of the house could hear Imam al-Sajjād (a) when he was reciting, and the same level must have been adopted by Imam al-Bāqir (a) when he was reciting. Now if those passing by near the house could hear his sound and stopped to hear him recite then so be it but the Imam certainly did not target them.

The Imam also instructs Abī Baṣīr to practice *tarjīʿ* or ‘quaver’ his voice to achieve a beautiful sound that is loved by Allah. *Tarjīʿ* literally means ‘doubling, returning, repeating’ and when applied to sound refers to fluctuation in the throat to produce a vibrating tone especially noticeable when elongating the vowels.

Whether the Qurʾan could be recited in melodious tones was an extremely controversial issue in so far as some early proto-Sunni authorities tried to distance the recitation of the Qurʾan with any association to ‘singing’, but we see that this particular technique is permitted, nay, encouraged by the Imam.⁸⁴

84 That the Prophet (s) permitted *tarjīʿ* and even employed it in his recitation at times is confirmed in an authentic report in the Sunni corpus in which the companion ‘Abdallāh b. Mughaffāl relates that he heard the Prophet (s) on the day Mecca was conquered and ‘he was riding on a camel of his while reciting Sūrat al-Fāṭḥ’ and he ‘made *tarjīʿ* in it’. The narrator who heard this report from ‘Abdallāh, a successor (*ṭābiʿ*) called Muʿāwiya b. Qurra, comments that he would have demonstrated the *tarjīʿ* of the Prophet (s) as relayed to him by ‘Abdallāh if he did not fear the people ‘gathering around’. This could indicate that it was a tone that had fallen out of favor and would draw negative attention. When Muʿāwiya was pressed by his student, the famous narrator Shuʿba b. al-Hajjāj, to disclose it, he gave in and did so, however, we are at a disadvantage since the exact sound cannot be conveyed in written format (in which hadīth came to be transmitted) and all we encounter when reading the report today is three consecutive *alifs* conveying the rise and fall of pitch with a reiteration of the same sound. Some commentators who were not comfortable in ascribing *tarjīʿ* to the Prophet (s) even put forward a ridiculous interpretation, with no support whatsoever from the text, that the rise and fall of sound was caused by the ‘shaking of the camel’ the Prophet (s) was riding on and not something deliberate on his part. See *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*, hadīth 7340.

We can conclude from this that our Imams supported the use of natural melodious tones when reciting the Qur'an as a means to beautify it. However, one should make sure not to contradict the rules of recitation, such as prolonging where prolongation is not required, or exaggerating in prolongation beyond the norm and thereby interfering with the ability to convey the meaning. More importantly, one should not fall into the scale of prohibited tones which are considered 'musical singing', and this is easier said than done.

٤٧ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنِ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ، عَمَّنْ ذَكَرَهُ:
عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «إِنَّ الْقُرْآنَ نَزَلَ بِالْحُزْنِ، فَأَقْرَأُوهُ
بِالْحُزْنِ»

(47) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'The Qur'an came down with sorrow so recite it with sorrow.'⁸⁵

Explanation

'Came down with sorrow' alludes to the Qur'an coming down as a grave and solemn wake-up call for the human being who is immersed in heedlessness so as to awaken him to the severe consequences of his chosen path.

Someone who truly reflects on the Qur'an's weighty message can have no other reaction than tears pouring from their eyes. Thus, the underlying emotion in any melodious tone adopted will naturally be that of sorrow instead of frivolity or up-beat entertainment. As the Qur'an itself reminds us: "So let them laugh a little and weep much as recompense for what they used to earn" (9:82).

85 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 629, hadith 2/3525. The intermediary between Ibn Abī 'Umayr and the Imam is unknown. Despite this, some scholars would consider the report acceptable because they assert that Ibn Abī 'Umayr does not narrate except from someone who is reliable.

CHAPTER 18

HOW LONG TO COMPLETE?

٤٨ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ حَمَادٍ، عَنِ الْحُسَيْنِ بْنِ الْمُحْتَارِ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ؟ قَالَ: «لَا يُعْجِبُنِي أَنْ تَقْرَأَهُ فِي أَقَلِّ مِنْ شَهْرٍ»

(48) Muhammad b. Abdallāh said: 'I said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (a): "Do I recite the [whole] Qur'an in a single night?" He said: "It is not agreeable to me that you recite it [all] in less than a month."⁸⁶

٤٩ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْحُسَيْنِ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ النُّعْمَانِ، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ حُسَيْنِ بْنِ خَالِدٍ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: قُلْتُ لَهُ: فِي كَمْ أَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ؟ فَقَالَ: «أَقْرَأُهُ أَحْمَاسًا، أَقْرَأُهُ أَسْبَاعًا، أَمَا إِنَّ عِنْدِي مُصْحَفًا مُجَرَّى أَرْبَعَةَ عَشَرَ جُزْءًا»

(49) Husayn b. Khālid said: 'I said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (a): "In how many [days] should I recite the [whole] Qur'an?" He said: "Recite it in

86 *Al-kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 636, hadith 1/3538. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter, Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh, whose identity cannot be ascertained.

fifths, recite it in sevenths; as for me, I have a codex divided into fourteen parts.”⁸⁷

Explanation

The early community were noted for the practice of completing the whole Qur'an over a number of days. To do this they would divide the Qur'an into several parts, and complete a part per day. The Imam's answer of 'recite it in fifths, recite it in sevenths' indicates that the Qur'an could be divided into five or seven parts and completed in five or seven days respectively.

The division present in the Imam's personal copy of the Qur'an can be used to infer that he would complete it in two weeks' time, although it is possible that he recited more than one part in a day.

٥٠ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحَكَمِ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ أَبِي حَمْزَةَ، قَالَ: سَأَلَ أَبُو بَصِيرٍ أَبَا عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ - وَأَنَا حَاضِرٌ - فَقَالَ لَهُ: جُعِلْتُ فِدَاكَ، أَقْرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا»
فَقَالَ: فِي لَيْلَتَيْنِ؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا» حَتَّى بَلَغَ سِتَّ لَيَالٍ، فَأَشَارَ بِيَدِهِ،
فَقَالَ: «هَآ». ثُمَّ قَالَ أَبُو عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «يَا أَبَا مُحَمَّدٍ، إِنْ مِنْكَ قَبْلُكُمْ مِنْ أَصْحَابِ مُحَمَّدٍ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ كَانَ يَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ فِي شَهْرٍ وَأَقَلِّ؛ إِنْ الْقُرْآنَ لَا يَقْرَأُ هَذْرَمَةً، وَلَكِنْ يُرْتَلُ تَرْتِيلاً، إِذَا مَرَرْتَ بِآيَةٍ فِيهَا ذِكْرُ النَّارِ، وَقَفْتَ عِنْدَهَا، وَتَعَوَّذْتَ بِاللَّهِ مِنَ النَّارِ فَقَالَ أَبُو بَصِيرٍ: أَقْرَأَ الْقُرْآنَ فِي رَمَضَانَ فِي لَيْلَةٍ؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا» فَقَالَ: فِي لَيْلَتَيْنِ؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا» فَقَالَ: فِي ثَلَاثٍ؟ فَقَالَ: «هَآ» وَأَوْمَأَ بِيَدِهِ فَقَالَ: «نَعَمْ، شَهْرٌ»

87 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 637, hadith 3/3540. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter, probably Ḥusayn b. Khālīd Abī al-'Alā al-Khaṭṭāf, whose status is disputed.

رَمَضَانَ لَا يُشَبِّهُهُ شَيْءٌ مِنَ الشُّهُورِ، لَهُ حَقٌّ وَحَرَمَةٌ، أَكْثَرُ مِنَ الصَّلَاةِ
مَا امْتَطَعَتْ»

(50) *Alī b. Abī Ḥamza said: Abū Baṣīr asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) while I was present. He [Abū Baṣīr] said to him: "May I be made your ransom. Do I complete the Qur'an in one night?" He [the Imam] replied: "No." He said: "In two nights?" He replied: "No." Until it reached six nights at which he [the Imam] gestured with his hand and said: "There!" Then Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: "O Abā Muḥammad [i.e. Abū Baṣīr], those who were before you from among the companions of Muḥammad (s) used to complete the Qur'an in a month or less. Verily the Qur'an is not to be recited rapidly, rather, it is recited with a measured pace. If you pass by a verse in which there is mention of the hellfire, stop at it and seek refuge in Allah from the hellfire." Abū Baṣīr said: "Do I complete the Qur'an in Ramadān in a single night?" He [the Imam] replied: "No." He said: "In two nights." He replied: "No." He said: "In three." He replied: "There!" gesturing with his hand. Then he said: "Of course, the month of Ramadān is not comparable to any other month, it has a special right and sanctity. Increase [in it] of prayer as much as you can."⁸⁸*

Explanation

The key thing that the Imams stressed as far as the recitation of the Qur'an is concerned is that it should not be 'rapid', rather, it should follow a 'measured pace'. This has been further clarified in the subsequent statement 'If you pass by a verse ... stop at it ...'

In other words, it is not enough to merely utter the words; you must give the Qur'an its full due. To do this you must engage actively with the Qur'an, understand its meaning, and react

88 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, pp. 638-639, hadith 5/3542. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except *Alī b. Abī Ḥamza al-Baṭā'inī* whose status is controversial. Many scholars accept his reports from *Abī Baṣīr Yaḥyā* which are supposed to have been narrated from him before his later deviation. See also *al-Kāfī*, vol. 4, pp. 636-637, hadith 2/3539.

appropriately at the appropriate instances, pausing to reflect whenever required.

The reports in this chapter should not be taken to be contradictory though they may seem to be so at first glance. How long one should take to complete the Qur'an is not a fixed number but a variable depending on the individual in question. This is why the Imams were open to different numbers. Having said this, there does seem to be a recommended upper limit to be attempted by the average reciter; a recommended lower limit for those with the capacity to do more, and freedom to choose a personalized number of days in between these two limits.

A period of **thirty days** or roughly a month, which the Imam specifies for Muḥammad b. 'Abdallāh in hadith 48, would be the ideal **upper limit** to complete the Qur'an.

This is supported by the Imam's statement to Abū Baṣīr 'those who were before you from among the companions of Muḥammad (s) used to complete the Qur'an in a month or less'.

Further support can be found in the Prophet's instruction to 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr as preserved in the Sunni corpus:

اقْرَأِ الْقُرْآنَ فِي شَهْرٍ

'Recite the Qur'an in a month.'

This is also consistent with division of the Qur'an into thirty *juz'* (parts) as found in copies to this day.

It is only when 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr repeatedly emphasizes his capacity to do more that the Prophet (s) agrees to reduce the number of days for him, first twenty, then fifteen, then ten, and when 'Abdallāh pushes for even further reduction the Prophet (s) says:

اقْرَأْ فِي سَبْعٍ وَلَا تَزِيدَنَّ عَلَى ذَلِكَ

*'Recite it in seven [days] and do not do more than this.'*⁸⁹

We learn from this that the one who has the capacity should complete it in a week's time, in other words, **seven days** is the ideal **lower limit** which one should not go under.

This is totally consistent with the Imam fixing six nights for Abū Baṣīr, since the latter began his query at one night and was interested in the minimum number of days for completion. A week's time is also roughly consistent with the Imam's answer to Husayn b. Khālīd 'recite it in fifths, recite it in sevenths' [in hadith number 49] as the Imam must have been aware of the former's personal capacity.

That it was the practice of the companions with the capability to adhere to this lower limit is demonstrated by a report in the Sunni corpus narrated by Aws b. Hudhayfa who asked some companions:

كَيْفَ يُحْزَبُونَ (تحزبون) الْقُرْآنَ

'How do you [pl.] divide the Qur'an [to complete it]?''

They replied:

ثَلَاثَ وَخَمْسَ وَسَبْعَ وَتِسْعَ وَإِحْدَى عَشْرَةَ وَثَلَاثَ عَشْرَةَ وَحِزْبَ الْمُفَصَّلِ وَحْدَهُ

*'Three, five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, and the mufaṣṣal portion on its own.'*⁹⁰

89 Sunan Abī Dāwūd, hadith 1388.

90 Sunan Abī Dāwūd, hadith 1393.

This is understood to mean that they recited in the following way:

Day 1: [al-Fātiḥa +] al-Baqara – al-Nisā' [**three** chapters]

Day 2: al-Mā'ida – al-Tawba [**five** chapters]

Day 3: Yūnus – al-Naḥl [**seven** chapters]

Day 4: al-Isrā' – al-Furqān [**nine** chapters]

Day 5: al-Shu'arā' – Yā-Sīn [**eleven** chapters]

Day 6: al-Şāffāt – al-Ḥujurāt [**thirteen** Chapters]

Day 7: Qāf – al-Nās [**muḥfaṣṣal**]⁹¹

Of course, this lower limit of seven days is for ordinary time. As the Imam makes clear to Abū Baṣīr, the incomparable month of Ramaḍān 'has a special right and sanctity', thus an exception was made to the one week rule. The quest to recite more of the Qur'an in the month in which it was revealed means the Imam reduces the lower limit to three days.

Indeed, three days is the **absolute** lower limit that should never be contravened under any circumstance. In a version of the 'Abdallāh b. 'Amr report we came across before, 'Abdallāh seeks a reduction below seven days and the Prophet (s) replies:

لَا يَفْقَهُ مَنْ قَرَأَهُ فِي أَقَلِّ مِنْ ثَلَاثٍ

'One who recites it [all] in less than three days cannot [possibly] understand it.'⁹²

91 This interpretation is given by al-Zarkashī in his *al-Burhān fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān*.

92 *Sunan Abī Dāwūd*, hadith 1390.

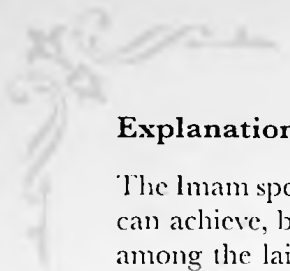
CHAPTER 19

A TRUE SCHOLAR WITH THE QUR'AN

٥١ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ الْبَرْقِيِّ، عَنْ إِسْمَاعِيلَ بْنِ مِهْرَانَ، عَنْ أَبِي سَعِيدٍ الْقَمَاطِ، عَنِ الْحَلِيِّ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «قَالَ أَمِيرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: أَلَا أُخْبِرُكُمْ بِالْفَقِيهِ حَقِّ الْفَقِيهِ؟ مَنْ لَمْ يَقْنِطِ النَّاسَ مِنْ رَحْمَةِ اللَّهِ، وَلَمْ يُؤْمِنْهُمْ مِنْ عَذَابِ اللَّهِ، وَلَمْ يَرْخِصْ لَهُمْ فِي مَعَاصِي اللَّهِ، وَلَمْ يَتْرِكِ الْقُرْآنَ رَغْبَةً عَنْهُ إِلَى غَيْرِهِ؛ أَلَا لَأَخِيرُ فِي عِلْمٍ لَيْسَ فِيهِ تَفَهُُّمٌ، أَلَا لَأَخِيرُ فِي قِرَاءَةٍ لَيْسَ فِيهَا تَدَبُّرٌ، أَلَا لَأَخِيرُ فِي عِبَادَةٍ لَيْسَ فِيهَا تَفَكُّرٌ»

(51) *The Commander of the Faithful (a) said: 'Should I not inform you of the scholar who is truly a scholar? The one who does not cause despair among the people towards the mercy of Allah, nor does he make them feel secure from the punishment of Allah. The one who does not concede to them in disobedience of Allah, nor does he abandon the Qur'an by preferring something else over it. Behold! There is no good in knowledge in which there is no understanding. Behold! There is no good in recital in which there is no pondering. Behold! There is no good in worship in which there is no reflection.'* ⁹³

93 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 1, p. 87, hadith 3/69. The report has a **reliable** chain. Ibn al-Ghaḍā'irī's criticism of Ismā'īl b. Mihrān, who has explicit strengthening from both al-Ṭūsī and al-Najāshī, that 'his hadith is not pure, so he makes mistakes at times and does well at others' self-evidently does not apply to this report (and to hadith number 20).



Explanation

The Imam speaks of the elusive balance that only a true scholar can achieve, between creating a genuine fear and awe of God among the laity which keeps them away from forsaking their ultimate responsibility to Allah, while at the same time not crushing that all important spark of hope which can call back even the most degenerate of sinners from the edge of despair. This is a tough balancing act which can only be achieved by the one who has internalized this balance first. Reports speak of how 'fear' and 'hope' should be exactly equal in the heart of a believer.

'Does not concede to them in disobedience of Allah' means that a true scholar does not make undue allowances in the religion, attempt to find loopholes to tweak Islam and make it compatible with the desires of the masses so as to gain acceptance.

CHAPTER 20

CREATED OR UNCREATED?

٥٢ - حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سَعْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عِيْسَى بْنُ عُثَيْدٍ الْبُقَطِينِيُّ قَالَ: كَتَبَ عَلِيُّ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنُ عَلِيٍّ بِنِ مُوسَى الرِّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِلَى بَعْضِ شِيعَتِهِ بِبَغْدَادَ: «بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ عَصَمَنَا اللَّهُ وَ إِيَّاكَ مِنَ الْفِتْنَةِ فَإِنْ يَفْعَلْ فَأَعْظَمَ بِهَا نِعْمَةً وَإِلَّا يَفْعَلْ فَهِيَ الْهَلَكَةُ نَحْنُ نَرَى أَنَّ الْجِدَالَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ بِدْعَةٌ اشْتَرَكَ فِيهَا السَّائِلُ وَالْمُجِيبُ فَتَعَاطَى السَّائِلُ مَا لَيْسَ لَهُ وَ تَكْلَفَ الْمُجِيبُ مَا لَيْسَ عَلَيْهِ وَ لَيْسَ الْخَالِقُ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَ مَا سِوَاهُ مُخْلُوقٌ وَ الْقُرْآنُ كَلَامُ اللَّهِ لَا يَجْعَلُ لَهُ اسْمًا مِنْ عِنْدِكَ فَتَكُونُ مِنَ الضَّالِّينَ جَعَلْنَا اللَّهُ وَ إِيَّاكَ مِنَ الَّذِينَ يَخْشَوْنَ رَبَّهُم بِالْغَيْبِ وَ هُمْ مِنَ السَّاعَةِ مُشْفِقُونَ»

(52) *Muhammad b. 'Isā b. 'Ubayd al-Yaqtīnī said: 'Imam al-Hādī (a) wrote to one of his Shia in Baghdad: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent the Merciful. May Allah protect us and you from the trial (fitna). If He does then count it a great blessing, and if He does not then it is perdition! We consider argumentation about the Qur'an to be an innovation (bid'a) which both questioner and respondent have partaken in. The questioner has engaged in what is not for him [and is not his concern] while the respondent has borne what is not on him [and is not his responsibility to bear]. There is no creator except for Allah, and what is other than Him is created. The Qur'an is the speech of Allah. Do not coin a word for it from yourself lest you become among the astray. May*

Allah make us and you of those who 'fear their Lord without seeing Him and are of the Hour apprehensive'^{94, 95}

Explanation

The trial (*fitna*) was the inquisition (*miḥna*) that was initiated by the Abbasid Caliph al-Ma'mūn (d. 218) and which continued after him. It forced all public figures and scholars to take a position on whether the Qur'an is created or not. The Imam is explicit in denouncing the question as an innovation.

٥٣ - حَدَّثَنَا جَعْفَرُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ مَسْرُورٍ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ جَعْفَرِ الْخَمِيرِيِّ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ هَاشِمٍ عَنِ الرَّيَّانِ بْنِ الصَّلْتِ قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِلرَّضَا عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَا تَقُولُ فِي الْقُرْآنِ؟ فَقَالَ: «كَلامُ اللَّهِ لَا تَتَجَاوَزُوهُ وَلَا تَطْلُبُوا الْهُدَى فِي غَيْرِهِ فَضِلُّوا»

(53) *Al-Rayyān b. al-Ṣalt* said: 'I said to Imam al-Riḍā (a): "What do you say about the Qur'an?" He said: "The speech of Allah. Do not go beyond it nor seek guidance in other than it – for you will be led astray."⁹⁶

٥٤ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ هَاشِمٍ وَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ، قَالَا حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ عِيسَى، قَالَ حَدَّثَنِي هِشَامُ الْمَشْرِقِيُّ: أَنَّهُ دَخَلَ عَلَى أَبِي الْحَسَنِ الْخُرَّاسَانِيِّ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ فَقَالَ: «إِنَّ أَهْلَ الْبَصْرَةِ سَأَلُوا عَنِ الْكَلَامِ فَقَالُوا إِنَّ يُونُسَ يَقُولُ إِنَّ الْكَلَامَ لَيْسَ بِمَخْلُوقٍ! فَقُلْتُ لَهُمْ: صَدَقَ يُونُسُ إِنَّ الْكَلَامَ لَيْسَ

94 Qur'an [21:49].

95 Al-Ṣadūq's *Amālī*, p. 639, hadith 14/864; *Al-Tawhīd*, pp. 218-219, hadith 4. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣṣaḥ al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'abara*, vol. 2, pp. 387-388, hadith 1/1573).

96 Al-Ṣadūq's *Amālī*, p. 639, hadith 13/863; *Al-Tawhīd*, p. 218, hadith 2. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣṣaḥ al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'abara*, vol. 2, p. 388, hadith 2/1574).

بِمَخْلُوقٍ، أَمَا بَلَّغْتُكُمْ قَوْلَ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ حِينَ سُئِلَ عَنِ الْقُرْآنِ
أَخَالِقُ هُوَ أَوْ مَخْلُوقٌ فَقَالَ لَهُمْ: لَيْسَ بِمَخَالِقٍ وَ لَا مَخْلُوقٌ إِنَّمَا هُوَ كَلَامُ
الْخَالِقِ، فَقَوَّيْتُ أَمْرَ يُونُسَ، وَ قَالُوا إِنَّ يُونُسَ يَقُولُ: إِنَّ مِنَ السُّنَّةِ أَنْ
يُصَلِّيَ الْإِنْسَانُ رَكْعَتَيْنِ وَ هُوَ جَالِسٌ بَعْدَ الْعَتَمَةِ فَقُلْتُ صَدَقَ يُونُسُ»

(54) *Muhammad b. Isā said: 'Hishām al-Mashriqī narrated to me that he entered to see Imam al-Ridā (a) so he [the Imam] said: "The people of Basra inquired about divine speech and said 'Yūnus says that divine speech is not created!' I said to them: 'Yūnus has spoken the truth – divine speech is not created. Has the statement of Abī Ja'far (a) not reached you when he was asked about the Qur'an, whether it is the creator or created, he said to them: "It is not creator nor created, rather, it is the speech of the Creator." Thus I strengthened the position of Yūnus. They [i.e. the Basrans] also said: 'Yūnus says that it is from the sunna for a man to pray two units while seated after the 'ashā' prayer.' I said: 'Yūnus has spoken the truth.'"*⁹⁷

Explanation

The Basrans report Yūnus's assertion that divine speech is not created to the Imam. The Imam affirms this statement but it becomes clear that it is only half the truth. For he goes on to quote Imam al-Bāqir's (a) statement which adds that the Qur'an should equally not be taken to be creator. In sum, the Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt stuck to the statement 'the Qur'an was the speech of the Creator' and could not be moved to take a position in what they saw was a false binary.

97 *Rijāl al-Kāshshī*, pp. 408-409, hadith 934. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muḥam al-Aḥādīth al-Muḥabara*, vol. 2, p. 388, hadith 3/1575).

CHAPTER 21

PERSONAL INTERPRETATION OF THE QUR'AN

٥٥ - حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ مُوسَى بْنِ الْمُتَوَكِّلِ رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ بْنِ هَاشِمٍ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي عَنْ الرَّيَّانِ بْنِ الصَّلْتِ عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ مُوسَى الرِّضَا عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ آبَائِهِ عَنْ أَمِيرِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: «قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: قَالَ اللَّهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ: مَا أَمَرَ بِي مَنْ فَسَّرَ بِرَأْيِهِ كَلَامِي وَمَا عَرَفَنِي مَنْ شَبَّهَنِي بِخَلْقِي وَمَا عَلَيَّ دِينِي مَنْ اسْتَعْمَلَ الْقِيَاسَ فِي دِينِي»

(55) The Commander of the Faithful (a) said: 'The Messenger of Allah (s) said: 'Allah, Mighty and Majestic is He, says: 'He has not believed in Me the one who interprets My words based on his opinion, he has not known Me the one who compares Me to My creation, and he is not upon My religion the one who uses analogical reasoning in My religion.'»⁹⁸

98 Al-Ṣadūq's *Amālī*, pp. 55-56, hadith 3/10; *Uyūn Akhbār al-Ridā*, vol. 1, p. 150, hadith 4/111; *al-Taḥfīd*, pp. 66-67, hadith 23. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Mu'tabara*, vol. 2, p. 387, hadith 1/1572).

٥٦ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ خَالِدٍ، عَنِ الْحَسَنِ بْنِ عَلِيٍّ الْوَشَاءِ، عَنْ أَبَانَ الْأَحْمَرِ، عَنْ زِيَادِ بْنِ أَبِي رَجَاءٍ: عَنْ أَبِي جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «مَا عَلِمْتُمْ فَقُولُوا، وَمَا لَمْ تَعْلَمُوا فَقُولُوا: اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ؛ إِنَّ الرَّجُلَ لَيَنْتَزِعُ الْآيَةَ مِنَ الْقُرْآنِ يَجُرُّ فِيهَا أَبْعَدَ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ»

(56) Imam al-Bāqir (a) said: 'Say what you know, and if you do not know then say, "Allah knows more!"' A man selectively picks out a verse from the Qur'an and falls in it [by misinterpreting it] a distance farther than what is between the earth and the sky!⁹⁹

٥٧ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يَحْيَى، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ حُسَيْنِ بْنِ سَعِيدٍ، عَنِ النَّضْرِ بْنِ سُوَيْدٍ، عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «قَالَ أَبِي عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: مَا ضَرَبَ رَجُلٌ الْقُرْآنَ بَعْضُهُ بِبَعْضٍ إِلَّا كَفَرَ»

(57) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: 'My father (a) said: "A man does not strike one part of the Qur'an with another without becoming a disbeliever."¹⁰⁰

Explanation

'Striking one part of the Qur'an with another' means to mistakenly 'combine' verses together. A man picks a verse that seems to align with his own personal understanding, even if it

99 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 1, p. 103, hadith 4/102. The report has a **reliable** chain (see: *Muṣam al-Aḥādīth al-Muṭabara*, vol. 1, p. 59, hadith 3/37).

100 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 667-668, hadith 18/3586. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter al-Qāsim b. Sulaymān whose status is unknown. The same report with a different lower chain is repeated in *al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 673, hadith 26/3594.

is ambiguous in nature, and interprets away all other verses in light of his choice.

The problem is not any inconsistency within the Qur'an but a failure to differentiate between the different verses of the Qur'an, since some of these are clear (*muḥkam*) while others are ambiguous (*mutashābih*), some are general (*ʿamm*) while others are specific (*khāṣṣ*), some are literal (*ḥaqīqa*) while others are figurative (*majāz*) etc. One needs to take recourse to the 'interpreters' of the Qur'an, namely, the Imams of Ahl al-Bayt, to know how different verses 'fit' together.

This understanding is consistent with the answer given to al-Ṣadūq (d. 381) when he asked his teacher Ibn al-Walīd (d. 343) about the meaning of this report. The latter responded:

'It is to answer a man concerning the interpretation (*tafsīr*) of a particular verse with the *tafsīr* of another verse.'¹⁰¹

101 *Maʿānī al-Akhbār*, p. 295.

CHAPTER 22

DECORATING THE QUR'AN

٥٨ - عَنْهُ عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عِيسَى عَنْ سُمَاعَةَ قَالَ: سَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ رَجُلٍ
يُعَشِّرُ الْمَصَاحِفَ بِالذَّهَبِ فَقَالَ «لَا يَصْلُحُ» فَقَالَ إِنَّهَا مَعِيشَتِي
فَقَالَ «إِنَّكَ إِنْ تَرَكْتَهُ لِلَّهِ جَعَلَ اللَّهُ لَكَ مَخْرَجًا»

(58) Samā'a said: 'I asked him [i.e. the Imam] about a man who marks out ten-verse sections in copies of the Qur'an by gold. He replied: "It is not appropriate." I said: "But it is my living?" He said: "If you were to leave it for the sake of Allah then Allah will provide for you a way out [i.e. a solution]."'¹⁰²

Explanation

There arose the practice called *khatm* of dividing verses by placing some dots or diagonal lines between them. Another practice called *ta'shīr* involved demarcating sections within a *sūra* by drawing a circle at the end of each tenth verse. This was sometimes done with gold to adorn the Qur'an as can be found in early manuscripts. This practice is prohibited by the Imam, or at the very least discouraged, if we take the next report into account.

102 *Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*, vol. 6, p. 421, hadith 176. The report has a **reliable** chain.

٥٩ - عَلِيُّ بْنُ إِبْرَاهِيمَ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ صَفْوَانَ، عَنْ ابْنِ مُسْكَانَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ الْوَرَّاقِ، قَالَ: عَرَضْتُ عَلَى أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ كِتَابًا فِيهِ قُرْآنٌ مُحْتَمٌّ، مُعَشَّرٌ بِالذَّهَبِ، وَكُتِبَ فِي آخِرِهِ سُورَةُ بِالذَّهَبِ، فَأَرَيْتُهُ إِيَّاهُ، فَلَمْ يَعْجَبْ فِيهِ شَيْئًا إِلَّا كِتَابَةَ الْقُرْآنِ بِالذَّهَبِ، وَ قَالَ: «لَا يُعْجِبُنِي أَنْ يُكْتَبَ الْقُرْآنُ إِلَّا بِالسَّوَادِ، كَمَا كُتِبَ أَوَّلَ مَرَّةٍ»

(59) Muḥammad al-Warrāq¹⁰³ said: 'I presented to Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) a document in which there was the Qur'an marked with verse-divisions and ten-verse-divisions decorated in gold, and at its end there was a chapter written in gold. I showed it to him and he did not find fault with anything in it except the writing of the Qur'an with gold, saying: "It is not agreeable to me that the Qur'an be written with other than the black [ink] the way it was written the first time."¹⁰⁴

Explanation

This is the only report narrated by this Muḥammad whose profession is given as *warrāq*, making him a paper-dealer, copyist, or bookseller, likely having a vested interest in the sale of such copies of the Qur'an. If the report is accepted as authentic it would mean that the Imam did not take as much issue with the practice of using gold in *khatm* and *ta'shīr* as he did with writing the Qur'anic script itself in gold. Thus, the majority of our scholars have deemed the use of gold in *khatm* and *ta'shīr* to be discouraged and not prohibited outright as a way of reconciling both reports.

103 All manuscripts give the name as Muḥammad bin al-Warrāq but I have amended this as he is most likely identical to the Muḥammad al-Warrāq al-Kūfī listed by al-Ṭūsī among the companions of al-Ṣādiq (a) in his *Rijāl*.

104 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, p. 663, hadith 8/3576. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except the primary transmitter Muḥammad whose status is unknown.

٦٠ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ سَهْلِ بْنِ زِيَادٍ، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ بْنِ أَبِي نَصْرٍ، عَنْ دَاوُدَ بْنِ سِرْحَانَ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «لَيْسَ بِتَحْلِيلَةِ الْمَصَاحِفِ وَالسُّيُوفِ بِالذَّهَبِ وَالْفِضَّةِ بَأْسٌ»

(60) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: "There is no problem in decorating copies [of the Qur'an] and swords with gold and silver."¹⁰⁵

Explanation

This report can be used to support the reconciliation alluded to before. However, it is not evident whether 'decorating' here extends to *khatm* and *ta'shīr*, for it could be referring to the uncontroversial act of decorating the outer wrapping-boards (covers) and margins of pages, etc.

105 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 13, p. 99, hadith 7/12632. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Sahl b. Ziyād, but he is merely a *shaykh al-ijāza* (passive transmitter) for Aḥmad b. Muḥammad b. Abī Naṣr's transmission of the book of Dāwūd b. Sirḥān.



CHAPTER 23

BUYING AND SELLING THE QUR'AN

Introduction

The Imams of the Ahl al-Bayt insist that the Qur'an cannot be 'sold' or 'bought'. This is because no one can provide equal compensation for the Book of Allah, which is invaluable.

We will first come across a report in which Imam al-Şādiq (a) lays out the historical background of how the earliest generation of Muslims would obtain a copy of the Qur'an by writing it down for themselves from a copy suspended at the pulpit (*minbar*) of the Prophet's Mosque. Allowance was also made for someone to have it copied down, with the copyist then being gifted a certain amount, but this was without stipulating a price beforehand as is expected in transactions.

When the number of Muslims proliferated, and their strength to adhere to this principle diminished, there arose a wide-ranging business in which copies of the Qur'an began to be sold by professional copyists who plied it as their trade. The Imams did not totally outlaw this practice, but gave their followers a method by which they could work with the status quo while avoiding treating the Qur'an as a commodity. That is, the seller and the buyer should consider the transaction to be involving

the paper, the ink, the bindings, the wrappings, and the labor of one's 'hand', but not the Qur'an itself.¹⁰⁶

٦١ - أَحْمَدُ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنِ ابْنِ فَضَّالٍ، عَنْ عَلَابِ بْنِ عُثْمَانَ، عَنْ رَوْحِ بْنِ عَبْدِ الرَّحِيمِ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ شِرَاءِ الْمَصَاحِفِ وَبَيْعِهَا؟ فَقَالَ: «إِنَّمَا كَانَ يُوضَعُ الْوَرَقُ عِنْدَ الْمِنْبَرِ، وَكَانَ مَا بَيْنَ الْمِنْبَرِ وَالْحَائِطِ قَدَرُ مَا تَمُرُّ الشَّاةُ أَوْ رَجُلٌ مُنْحَرَفٌ» قَالَ: «فَكَانَ الرَّجُلُ يَأْتِي، فَيَكْتُبُ مِنْ ذَلِكَ، ثُمَّ إِتَاهُمْ اشْتَرَوْا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ». قُلْتُ: فَمَا تَرَى فِي ذَلِكَ؟ قَالَ لِي: «أَشْتَرِي أَحَبُّ إِلَيَّ مِنْ أَنْ أُبِيعَهُ»
«...

(61) Rawḥ b. Abd al-Raḥīm said: 'I asked Imam al-Sādiq (a) about buying copies of the Qur'an and their sale? He said: "A sheet [with the Qur'an written on it] used to be put at the pulpit (minbar), and there was between the pulpit and the wall [of the Prophet's Mosque] just enough

106 The dominant historical position among our scholars has been that the 'sale' and 'purchase' of the Qur'an in of itself is prohibited. Closer to our time, Sayyid al-Khūṭī and his students have argued that the existence of reports that indicate permissibility should be used to re-interpret those that seem to forbid it and thus the prohibition cannot be established, with some of them deeming it *makrūh* instead (see: *Miṣbah al-Faḳāhā fī al-Mu'āmalāt*, vol. 1, pp. 483-487). For instance, Sayyid al-Sīstānī's verdict when asked about the issue reads 'It is a **recommended precaution** to avoid selling it to a Muslim, so if you want to make a transaction with it then you make the transaction to be involving the covers and such-like, or the transaction should take the form of a conditional gift' (see: *Minhaj al-Sāliḥīn*, vol. 2, pp. 8-9). It is not obligatory to abide by a recommended precaution, so one can still sell it without accruing sin according to Sayyid al-Sīstānī. Shaykh Anṣārī maintained the prohibition and argued that there was no real conflict between the reports, since the reports that indicate permissibility do not provide the method by which this 'sale' is to be conducted so as to legalize it, something which has been given elsewhere (i.e. one should buy the constituent materials or secondary accessories making up the Book and not the Qur'an in of itself). In other words, the reports that indicate permissibility inherently assume the method outlined by the Imams to legalize the 'sale' being adapted (see: *al-Makāsib*, vol. 5, pp. 101-107). I prefer this last reconciliation.

space for a sheep to pass through or a man walking sideways. A man would come [into this space] and copy from that [sheet]. Then they began buying after that.” I said: “So what do you say about that?” He said to me: “That I buy it is preferable to me than that I sell it ...”¹⁰⁷

Explanation

This report establishes that the ‘buying’ and ‘selling’ of the Qur’an is an innovation since the earliest Muslims who were literate would obtain the Qur’an freely by standing at the narrow space between the pulpit and back-wall of the Mosque and copying from the master-copy placed at the pulpit.

A report very similar to this one contains the clarifying addition:

فَكَانَ الرَّجُلُ يَأْتِي فَيَكْتُبُ الْبَقَرَةَ وَيَجِيءُ آخَرُ فَيَكْتُبُ السُّورَةَ وَكَذَلِكَ
كَانُوا ثُمَّ اسْتَرَوْا بَعْدَ ذَلِكَ

*A man used to come and write [for himself] al-Baqara, another would come and write another chapter, and that is how they used to do, then they began buying [some time] after that.*¹⁰⁸

In spite of this, the ending of the report has the Imam permitting the practice, but this is only if a condition that will become clear in subsequent reports is followed.

٦٢ - عَنْهُ (الحسين بن سعيد) عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ عَنْ أَبِيهِ عَنْ
عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: «إِنَّ
أُمَّ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بِنْتِ (بنت) الْحَارِثِ (الحسن) أَرَادَتْ أَنْ تَكْتُبَ مُصْحَفًا

107 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 9, pp. 670-671, hadith 3/8565. The report has a **reliable** chain.

108 *Tahdhib al-Ahkām*, vol. 6, p. 420, hadith 173. The report has a **reliable** chain and is attributed to Abī Baṣīr who narrates it from Imam al-Ṣādiq (a).

وَ اشْتَرَتْ وَرَقًا مِنْ عِنْدِهَا وَ دَعَتْ رَجُلًا يَكْتُبُ لَهَا عَلَى غَيْرِ شَرْطٍ
فَأَعْطَتْهُ حِينَ فَرَغَ خَمْسِينَ دِينَارًا وَ إِنَّهُ لَمْ يَتَّعِ الْمَصَاحِفُ إِلَّا حَدِيثًا»

(62) Imam al-Sādiq (a) said: "The mother of 'Abdallāh¹⁰⁹ wanted to write down a copy of the Qur'an [for herself], so she bought paper of her own [money] and called a man to write it for her without stipulating a fee, then she gave him fifty gold coins when he was done. Copies of the Qur'an did not begin to be sold except recently."¹¹⁰

Explanation

Before the widespread availability of copies of the Qur'an which began to be 'sold' as products, someone who wanted to have their own personal copy of the Qur'an would either have to write it down for themselves (see hadith 61), or call a scribe to write it for them as in this report. Notice how there was no fee stipulated at the beginning, and the scribe was given an arbitrary 'gift' at the end of his labor. This is to avoid the acquisition of the Qur'an being treated as an ordinary transaction.

٦٣ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عُثْمَانَ بْنِ عِيسَى، عَنْ سَمَاعَةَ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُهُ عَنْ

109 The name is alternatively given in different manuscripts as 'the mother of 'Abdallāh bin al-Hārith' or 'the mother of 'Abdallāh bin al-Ḥasan'. It is probable, however, that the Imam said 'the mother of 'Abdallāh bint al-Ḥasan' but this became corrupted in transmission, for in this case it would be referring to his wife (a descendant of al-Ḥasan), and this is more consonant with the Imam knowing intimate details of how her copy of the Qur'an came about.

110 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 421, hadith 175. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except al-Qāsim b. Muḥammad (al-Jawhārī) whose status is unknown.

بَيْعَ الْمَصَاحِفِ وَشِرَائِهَا؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا تَشْتَرِ كِتَابَ اللَّهِ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ، وَلَكِنْ اشْتَرِ الْحَدِيدَ وَالْوَرَقَ وَالذَّقَاتَيْنِ، وَقُلْ: أَشْتَرِي مِنْكَ هَذَا بِكَذَا وَكَذَا»

(63) Samā'a said: 'I asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) about selling copies of the Qur'an and buying them. He said: "Do not buy the Book of Allah, the Mighty and Majestic, rather, buy the iron [used to frame it], the paper, and the two covers, and say 'I am buying these from you for such-and-such [amount]'. ""¹¹¹

Explanation

This is the condition for 'buying' the Qur'an. You declare your intention to be buying the constituent material and auxiliary items and not the Qur'an itself.

This also explains the Imam's preference for 'buying' over 'selling' (in hadith 61) as it would be harder to maintain this intention when it is one's profession to deal in the Qur'an as opposed to buying the Qur'an as a one-off.

٦٤ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ يُحْيَى، عَنْ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ عَلِيِّ بْنِ الْحَكَمِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ، عَنْ عَبْدِ الرَّحْمَنِ (عبد الله) بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ: عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: سَمِعْتُهُ يَقُولُ: «إِنَّ الْمَصَاحِفَ لَنْ تُشْتَرَى، فَإِذَا اشْتَرَيْتَ فَقُلْ: إِنَّمَا أَشْتَرِي مِنْكَ الْوَرَقَ وَمَا فِيهِ مِنَ الْأَدَمِ وَحُلِيِّهِ وَمَا فِيهِ مِنْ عَمَلٍ يَدِكَ بِكَذَا وَكَذَا»

(64) 'Abdallāh b. Sulaymān said: 'I heard Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) say: "Copies of the Qur'an are not bought. If you buy, then say 'I am buying from you the paper, the skin in it, its decoration, and the labor of your hand, by such-and-such [amount]'. ""¹¹²

111 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 9, pp. 669-670, hadith 2/8564. The report has a **reliable** chain.

112 *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 9, pp. 667-669, hadith 1/8563. 'Abd al-Rahmān b. Sulaymān (sic.) in the chain should be corrected to 'Abdallāh b. Sulaymān as per *Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*, vol. 6, p. 420, hadith 171. 'Abdallāh

٦٥ - وَ عَنْهُ (الحسين بن سعيد) عَنِ النَّضْرِ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ
عَنْ جَرَّاحِ الْمَدَائِنِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ : فِي بَيْعِ الْمَصَاحِفِ
قَالَ: «لَا تَبِعِ الْكِتَابَ وَلَا تَشْتَرِهِ وَ بَعِ الْوَرَقَ وَالْأَدِيمَ وَالْحَدِيدَ»

(65) *Jarrāḥ al-Madā'inī* from Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) about the sale of
copies of the Qur'an. He [the Imam] said: 'Do not sell the Book nor buy
it. Sell the paper, the skin, and the iron.'¹¹³

b. Sulaymān's status is unknown. The chain has no other defect since
the presence of the unknown 'Abdallāh b. Muḥammad in the lower
chain of *al-Kāfi* is rectified by his absence in the lower chain of *al-*
Tahdhīb.

113 *Tahdhīb al-Aḥkām*, vol. 6, p. 420, hadith 172. All the narrators
in the chain are reliable except al-Qāsim b. Sulaymān and Jarrāḥ al-
Madā'inī who are both unknown.

CHAPTER 24

CHARGING MONEY FOR TEACHING THE QUR'AN

Introduction

How can one demand payment in exchange for doing that which is obligatory, teaching others the Qur'an so that they can know their religion and implement it? Thus, we come across reports from the Imams denouncing this practice. Most of our jurists have interpreted these reports to mean it is discouraged (*makrūh*) instead of outright prohibited,¹¹⁴ but I maintain that the spirit of these reports must be taken into consideration.

٦٦ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ إِسْمَاعِيلَ
بْنِ بَزِيعٍ، عَنِ الْفَضْلِ بْنِ كَثِيرٍ، عَنْ حَسَّانَ الْمُعَلِّمِ، قَالَ: سَأَلْتُ أَبَا
عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ عَنِ التَّعْلِيمِ؟ فَقَالَ: «لَا تَأْخُذْ عَلَى التَّعْلِيمِ
أَجْرًا». قُلْتُ: الشِّعْرُ وَالرَّسَائِلُ وَمَا أَشَبَّهُ ذَلِكَ أَشَارَطُ عَلَيْهِ؟ قَالَ:

114 Shaykh al-Tūsī is a notable exception, in so far as he resolves the apparent contradiction between the reports on this issue in his *Tahdhībayn* by deeming it *harām* to teach the Qur'an by stipulating a payment beforehand, and *makrūh* to accept a reward after having taught it (see: *Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*, vol. 6, p. 419; *al-Istibṣār*, vol. 3, pp. 83-84). Note, however, that his *fiqhī* verdict in *al-Nihāya* is in keeping with the mainstream position (see p. 367).

«تَعَمْ، بَعْدَ أَنْ يَكُونَ الصَّبِيَّانِ عِنْدَكَ سَوَاءً فِي التَّعْلِيمِ، لَا تُفْضِلُ
بَعْضَهُمْ عَلَى بَعْضٍ»

(66) *Hassān al-Mu'allim* said: 'I asked Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) about teaching [the Qur'an]. He [the Imam] said: "Do not take for teaching [the Qur'an] any payment." I said: "[What about] poetry, letter-writing, and such-like, do I stipulate [a fee] for it?" He said: "Yes. After ensuring that the pupils are all equal in your teaching of them, and you do not favor some of them over others."¹¹⁵

Explanation

The narrator's profession is given as *mu'allim* or teacher. The Imam's instruction to treat the children equally may mean to demand equal payment from them all, or more likely, to avoid the favoritism that may be directed to those who pay more if he is teaching them all in a single class.

٦٧ - الْحُسَيْنُ بْنُ سَعِيدٍ عَنِ النَّضْرِ عَنِ الْقَاسِمِ بْنِ سُلَيْمَانَ عَنْ جَرَّاحِ
الْمَدَائِنِيِّ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: «الْمُعَلِّمُ لَا يَعْلَمُ بِالْأَجْرِ وَ
يَقْبَلُ الْهَدِيَّةَ إِذَا أُهْدِيَ إِلَيْهِ»

(67) *Imam al-Ṣādiq (a)* said: 'A teacher does not teach [the Qur'an] for payment but accepts the gift if it is gifted to him.'¹¹⁶

115 *Al-Kāfī*, vol. 9, p. 666, hadith 1/8561. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except al-Faḍl (al-Fuḍayl) b. Kathīr and Ḥassān al-Mu'allim who are both unknown.

116 *Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*, vol. 6, p. 419, hadith 168. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except al-Qāsim b. Sulaymān and Jarrah al-Madā'inī who are both unknown.

Explanation

The principle seems to be that a teacher of the Qur'an should not stipulate a payment in advance but can accept what is given to him later on without having put a pre-condition.

In fact, to show how strictly the Imams viewed doing business with the Qur'an and seeking monetary gain through it, even accepting gifts for teaching could be frowned upon as in the subsequent report.

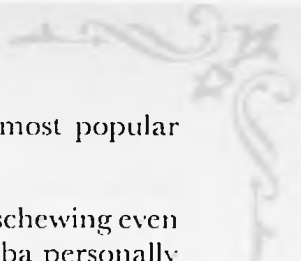
٦٨ - مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ يَحْيَى عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ بْنِ يَزِيدَ عَنْ ابْنِ أَبِي عُمَيْرٍ
عَنِ الْحَكَمِ بْنِ مِسْكِينَ عَنْ قُتَيْبَةَ الْأَعَشَى قَالَ: قُلْتُ لِأَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ
عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ إِنِّي أَقْرَأُ الْقُرْآنَ فَتُهْدَى إِلَيَّ الْهَدِيَّةُ فَأَقْبَلُهَا قَالَ «لَا»
قُلْتُ إِنْ لَمْ أَشَارِطْهُ قَالَ «أَرَأَيْتَ لَوْ لَمْ تُقَرِّئْهُ كَانَ يُهْدَى لَكَ» قَالَ
قُلْتُ لَا قَالَ «فَلَا تَقْبَلْهُ»

(68) Qutayba al-A'shā said: 'I said to Imam al-Ṣādiq (a): "I do teach the Qur'an, and a gift is presented to me, should I accept it?" He said: "No." I said: "[Can I accept it] If I do not stipulate it as a condition [before teaching]?" He said: "Consider if you were not teaching it [i.e. the Qur'an] – would you be so gifted?" I said: "No." He said: "Then do not accept it!"¹¹⁷

Explanation

Qutayba al-A'shā was a prominent student of Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) and a recognized *muqri'* or teacher of the Qur'an who taught the Qur'an in Kufa. He is identified as Shia even in Sunni biographical sources and his name is recorded in the books of recitation (*qirā'āt*) as a master who transmitted the Kufan recitation of Abū Bakr b. 'Ayyāsh from 'Aṣim (the alternative

117 *Tahdhīb al-Ahkām*, vol. 6, p. 419, hadith 169. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except al-Ḥakam b. Miskīn whose status is unknown.



Kufan transmission of Ḥafṣ from ‘Āṣim is the most popular recitation today).

It is likely that this instruction from the Imam of eschewing even gifts for teaching the Qur’an is meant for Qutayba personally since he had become renowned as a teacher and the Imam sought maximum reward for him.

CHAPTER 25

MISCELLANEOUS

٦٩ - الْحَسَنِ بْنُ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُعَلَّى بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنِ الْوَشَّاءِ، عَنْ أَبِيهِ،
عَنْ مَيْمُونِ الْقَدَّاحِ، قَالَ: قَالَ لِي أَبُو جَعْفَرٍ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ: «اقْرَأْ»
قُلْتُ: مِنْ أَيِّ شَيْءٍ أَقْرَأُ؟ قَالَ: «مِنْ السُّورَةِ التَّاسِعَةِ» قَالَ: فَجَعَلْتُ
الَّتَمِسُهَا، فَقَالَ: «اقْرَأْ مِنْ سُورَةِ يُوسُفَ» قَالَ: فَقَرَأْتُ: «لِلَّذِينَ أَحْسَنُوا
الْحُسْنَىٰ وَزِيَادَةٌ وَلَا يَرْهَقُ وُجُوهَهُمْ قَتَرٌ وَلَا ذِلَّةٌ» قَالَ: «حَسْبُكَ» قَالَ:
«قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَآلِهِ: إِنِّي لَأَعْجَبُ كَيْفَ لَا أَشْيِبُ إِذَا
قَرَأْتُ الْقُرْآنَ؟!»

(69) *Maymūn al-Qaddāh said: 'Imam al-Bāqir (a) said to me: "Recite!" I said: "From what should I recite?" He said: "The ninth chapter." So I began looking for it, whereupon he said: "Recite from Sūrat Yūsuf." I recited [until I reached] "For those who did good will be good and even more besides, neither darkness will overshadow their faces nor shame" [10:26]. He said: "Enough! The Messenger of Allah (s) said: 'I am surprised at how my hair does not turn white when I recite the Qur'an!'?"*¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ *Al-Kāfi*, vol. 4, pp. 668-669, hadith 20/3588. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Mu'allā b. Muḥammad, but he is merely a *shaykh al-ijāza* (passive transmitter) for the transmissions of al-Ḥasan b. 'Alī Washshā'. The status of Maymūn al-Qaddāh is also unknown.

Explanation

The Prophet (s) is surprised he does not grow old whilst reciting the Qur'an, for when you recite with understanding, even a little of the Qur'an is much because of its weighty contents.

The ninth chapter is Yūnus because Anfāl and Tawba were considered to be one chapter by the Imams, and this is also supported by the fact that they have a common theme and there is no *basmala* in between them.

٧٠ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ عَيْسَى، عَنْ يَاسِينَ الضَّرِيرِ، عَنْ حَرِيزٍ، عَنْ زُرَّارَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ: «تَأْخُذُ الْمُصْحَفَ فِي الثَّلَاثِ الثَّانِي مِنْ شَهْرِ رَمَضَانَ، فَتَنْشُرُهُ، وَتَضَعُهُ بَيْنَ يَدَيْكَ، وَتَقُولُ: «اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ بِكِتَابِكَ الْمُنَزَّلِ وَمَا فِيهِ، وَفِيهِ اسْمُكَ الْأَعْظَمُ الْأَكْبَرُ، وَأَسْمَاؤُكَ الْحُسْنَى وَمَا يُخَافُ وَيُرْجَى أَنْ تَجْعَلَنِي مِنْ عَتَقَائِكَ مِنَ النَّارِ» وَتَدْعُو بِمَا بَدَأَ لَكَ مِنْ حَاجَةٍ»

(70) Zurāra said: 'He [i.e. the Imam] said: "You take a copy of the Qur'an in the second-third of the month of Ramaḍān, spread it, place it in front of you, and say: 'O Allah, I beseech You by Your revealed Book, and what is in it, and in it is Your mightiest and greatest name, and Your beautiful names, and what is feared from and hoped for, that You make me among Your freed ones from the hellfire,' then you supplicate for what comes to you of need.'"¹¹⁹

٧١ - عِدَّةٌ مِنْ أَصْحَابِنَا، عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ، عَنْ يَعْقُوبَ بْنِ يَزِيدَ، عَنْ مُحَمَّدِ بْنِ شُعَيْبٍ، عَنْ أَبِي كَهْمَسٍ، عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ، قَالَ: «سِتَّةٌ تَلْحَقُ الْمُؤْمِنَ بَعْدَ وَفَاتِهِ: وَلَدٌ يَسْتَغْفِرُ لَهُ،

119 Al-Kāfi, vol. 4, pp. 663-664, hadith 9/3577. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Yāsīn al-Ḍarīr whose status is unknown.

وَمُصْحَفٌ يُخَلِّفُهُ، وَغَرْسٌ يَغْرِسُهُ، وَقَلِيبٌ يَخْفِزُهُ، وَصَدَقَةٌ يُجْرِيهَا، وَسُنَّةٌ يُؤْخَذُ بِهَا مِنْ بَعْدِهِ»

(71) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'Six will reach a believer [even] after his death: a [righteous] child that asks forgiveness for him, a copy of the Qur'an that he leaves behind [that is read from], a tree that he plants [which keeps providing fruit and shade], a well that he digs [that is drunk from], a charity that he perpetuates [which continues after him], and a [good] precedent [he set] that is followed after him.'¹²⁰

٧٢ - وَ هَذَا الْإِسْنَادِ (حَدَّثَنَا أَبِي رَحِمَهُ اللَّهُ قَالَ حَدَّثَنَا سَعْدُ بْنُ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ) عَنْ أَحْمَدَ بْنِ مُحَمَّدٍ (بْنِ خَالِدٍ) عَنِ الْهَيْثَمِ بْنِ عَبْدِ اللَّهِ التَّهْدِي عَنِ أَبِيهِ عَنْ أَبِي عَبْدِ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ قَالَ: الْمَرْوَةُ مُرْوَةٌ تَانِ مُرْوَةُ الْحَضَرِ وَ مُرْوَةُ السَّفَرِ فَأَمَّا مُرْوَةُ الْحَضَرِ فِتِلَاوَةُ الْقُرْآنِ وَ حُضُورُ الْمَسَاجِدِ وَ صُحْبَةُ أَهْلِ الْخَيْرِ وَ النَّظَرُ فِي الْفَقْهِ وَ أَمَّا مُرْوَةُ السَّفَرِ فَبَذْلُ الزَّادِ وَ الْمَزَاحُ فِي غَيْرِ مَا يُسْخِطُ اللَّهَ وَ قِلَّةُ الْخِلَافِ عَلَى مَنْ صَحَبَكَ وَ تَرْكُ الرِّوَايَةِ عَلَيْهِمْ إِذَا أَنْتَ فَارَقْتَهُمْ

(72) Imam al-Ṣādiq (a) said: 'Manly virtues are two; one whilst resident in one's hometown and the other whilst on a journey. As for the manly virtues whilst resident in one's hometown they are recitation of the Qur'an, attending the mosques, companionship with the people of good, and studying Islamic law (fiqh). As for the manly virtues whilst on a journey they are to offer provisions generously, indulging in humor in other than what angers Allah, avoiding disputation with those who accompany you, and not to tell-tale about them when you go your separate way.'¹²¹

120 Al-Kāfi, vol. 13, pp. 468-469, hadith 5/13288. All the narrators in the chain are reliable except Muḥammad b. Shu'ayb al-Ṣayrafi and al-Haytham Abī Kahmas who are both unknown. See also: Man Lā Yaḥdiruhū al-Faqīh, vol. 1, p. 185, hadith 54/555 and vol. 4, p. 246, hadith 17/5586; al-Khiṣāl, vol. 1, pp. 355-356, hadith 9; al-Ṣadūq's Amālī, pp. 233-234, hadith 2/246.

121 Ma'ānī al-Akhhār, p. 368. The report has a **reliable** chain. Al-Haytham b. 'Abdallāh al-Nahdī and his father are both praised (see:

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Rijāl al-Kashshī, pp. 313-314, hadith 696). See also al-Mufīd's *Amālī*, p. 44, hadith 3, with a strong chain to Ibn Abī 'Umayr who narrates 'from more than one' from the Imam. The larger background behind these words of the Imam can be found in al-Ṣadūq's *Amālī*, pp. 645-646, hadith 3/875.

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